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## ORIGIN AND CHARACTER OF THE MODERN ELEGY.

Communicated for The Athenæum, by M. Tissot, Member of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, and late Professor of Latin Poetry at the College of France.—V. p. 415.]

THE province of elegiac composition has been cultivated with equal care and assiduity by the moderns, as by the writers of antiquity. During the early ages of the Church, Lactantius and St. Ambrose composed elegies on the passion of Christ; Victorinus sang the martyrdom of the Maccabees; and Prudentius celebrated, in strains of pity, the holy heroes that shed their blood for the faith. In more modern times, the artless compositions of the Troubadours that have come down to us, betray a character of natural and plaintive melancholy which equally charms and melts the heart. Afterwards, when the modern languages of Europe were divested of the rust of the Middle Ages, when the dawn of learning began to re-appear after a night of seemingly interminable length, the imaginations of the poets were deeply impressed with a tinge of pathos and melancholy displayed in their compositions, which seem to assign them over to the elegiac tribe.

The Homer of Portugal manifested the power of his genius in elegy, as in epic poetry. His long train of misfortunes, his banishment of bitterness and sorrow, his lamentable and unsuccessful amours, and the chivalric adventures of a life shared by the vicissitudes of poetry and war, explain the double direction of the genius of the great painter of the woes of Inês de Castro, naturally gifted with the pathetic and the sublime. He has also composed a paraphrase on the 7th Psalm, which bears a high degree of celebrity in Portugal, and which, owing to the similar circumstances under which it was written, is always read with never-failing interest. The poet was on his return from Macao, when he was shipwrecked on the coast of Cambaya; and, in that afflicting position, exposed on a dreary distant shore, he still breathed his love for his native country in strains that emulate the laments of the Hebrews who sat on the banks of the waters of Babylon.

Sa de Miranda belongs as much to Spain as to Portugal, and he generally writes in the dialect of Castile. The elegy written by this poet on the death of his son, who perished on the field of battle in Africa, is distinguished by a vein of religious feeling which well accords with a heart wounded in its dearest sympathies. Antonio Ferreira, whom his contemporaries styled the *Horace of Portugal*, devoted, in the same way, his elegiac powers to the memory of his own friends, and that of the heroes of his age. This author aimed at a correctness of diction and sentiment, that seemed more estimable in his eyes than the impetuous sallies of genius which sometimes transport a poet beyond all ordinary bounds and transgress the limits of art. Next to him we meet with Andrade Caminha and Diego Bernares, both disciples of Ferreira; Rodriguez Lobo, and Jeronimo Cortereal, who wrote a poem on the misfortunes of the same Manuel de Souza pulveda, whose shipwreck on the coast of Africa had been previously described by Camoens. Spain is fully deserving of honour on account of numerous ballads of chivalry, which may be considered as elegiac songs of sensibility and su-

perior merit. We cannot, however, enlarge on a species of composition which belongs to the ruder efforts of the art. The first poet regarded by the Spaniards as a classic model, is Juan Boscan Almogaver, who, like his friend Garcilasso de la Vega, imitated the poets of Italy. Boscan, especially, imitates Petrarch, but with a greater degree of energy and animation of style. He frequently exhibits the correctness, though not the harmony, of the Tuscan bard. Garcilasso, also, is an imitator of the poet of Vaucluse, and, by his delicacy, grace, and fancy, surpasses Boscan in approximating to their mutual model. The literature of Spain contains many other poets who have written elegies; and among them we meet, not without some surprise, with the most fruitful and indefatigable of all dramatic authors, Lopez de Vega. The sonnets and canzonets of the swan of Vaucluse enjoy a high reputation throughout Europe, and, independently of their real merit, they have strong claims on attention as the earliest essays of modern literature. Nothing, certainly, can be more pure and celestial than the Poet's passion for Laura; and many have been inclined to suppose that the existence of such a person is problematical and questionable. But the poet has classical authority on his side for a passion of such wonderful constancy and sincerity; and the muses of Minnervus, Tibullus, and Propertius, justify the propensities of Petrarch, though his poetry is essentially different from the amatory elegy of the ancient writers. The principle of chivalry, which philosophers assign to modern times only, had given rise to ideas of exalted and enthusiastic love and admiration. Thus this passion became a species of religion, mingled with the fervour of Platonic contemplation, and invoked in a strain of mysticism which frequently occurs in the compositions of Petrarch. Alammani, Guarini, and Chiabrera, have also produced, with more or less success, and under different titles, several little pieces, which may be considered as genuine elegies. The Italians, especially, have preserved in their elegiac strains that gravity and majesty which are produced by great miseries, either public or private; as we find Castaldi, lamenting the eclipse of the glories of Italy, has composed a hymn which breathes the true spirit of poetry and patriotism. In the same way, Filicaja, in the seventeenth century, followed the footsteps of Castaldi. More recently, Pindemonti has diffused over his poetical compositions an air of musing and melancholy, which comes nearer than any similar essay to Gray's admirable 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard.'

According to the example of the great epic poets of ancient Rome, as well as those of Italy and Portugal, Milton has left behind him several poetical effusions, full of the most interesting sensibility. A more considerable work, which may be regarded as a series of mournful elegies, is the well-known 'Night Thoughts' of Young; but it is not easy to conceive how this English Doctor, who had experienced real misfortunes, and possessed indisputable talent, could be so very forced and unnatural, as he frequently is, in the description of his own woes. He sometimes gives way to the most ridiculous declamations, and the most intolerably tedious apostrophes, as well as the most unpardonable disorder and incongruity, so that the reader is prevented from feeling any sympathy with the sentiments of the poet. These terms may appear unjust to those

whose judgments are dazzled by the great success of the 'Night Thoughts;' but let them recollect, that the most severe criticisms that have been passed on the work, have proceeded from the author's own countrymen. It must be acknowledged, however, that the Fourth and the Sixth Nights contain excellencies of a superior order, such as appear frequently in Young, and effusions of poetical sentiment, which harmonise with the natural feelings of the heart. Among the English, Lord Lyttleton, William Mickle, and Miss Seward, have equally distinguished themselves by elegiac productions that do honour to the literature of their nation. But, among all the poets of England that have attempted elegy, the most celebrated, and justly so, is Thomas Gray, the author of the 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard.' Some of the odes of this poet possess, also, a considerable portion of the elegiac spirit. In proportion as man advances in life, he beholds the fond illusions vanish that interested his youth and manhood, and the sensations naturally felt by a heart disenchanted of the dazzling visions of early life, are invested with a peculiar charm of poetical sensibility. In his fine ode 'on a distant Prospect of Eton College,' the same turn of mind predominates to the fullest extent. But in the 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard,' the poet has soared to an elevation far beyond the pretensions of any other poets of his country who attempted the elegiac style. Accordingly, this composition is Gray's masterpiece; it breathes a sweetness of melancholy sensibility, and of gentle unassuming philosophy, that has excited the admiration of all Europe. In every country, writers of every class have attempted to infuse it into their respective languages: several of these translations have appeared in French, but none of them have done full justice to the original. It would be unjust, however, to refuse acknowledging the merit of Chénier's attempt, who has also given us a fine elegy, entitled 'The Promenade.'

It is a circumstance highly honourable to France, that, next to the stanzas of Malherbe, addressed to Duprier, the first elegy ranked among the records of her literature, as a model of poetry and eloquence, is an effort, inspired by one of the noblest sentiments of the human heart, that is, devotion to deposed eminence. In spite of numerous malversations, Fouqué owes it, perhaps, to Pellisson and La Fontaine, that his memory is not loaded with all the odium that is justly attached to dilapidating and speculating Ministers. But it is a matter of surprise, that Louis XIV. did not imitate the magnanimity of Cæsar, who, overcome by the eloquence of Cicero, let fall from his hands the papers that doomed Ligarius to condemnation. The courageous conduct of Pellisson, and even of La Fontaine, merited a triumph of that description.

The little piece of Voltaire on the death of his friend Genonville, deserves to be ranked among the best elegies in the world of letters, and perhaps it merits a preference over the ode of Horace on the death of Quintilius Varus.

Every one is acquainted with the pathetic strains that have escaped from Gilbert, who, justly conscious of his own talents, saw with anguish the approach of death, that was coming to cut off all the honours to which he might reasonably aspire. No sentiment is more deep and impres-

sive than the sorrow of disappointed genius; and such a feeling dictated to Gilbert some very fine stanzas, which are deserving of the utmost admiration. When we read them, we are tempted to repeat the words of Fenelon: 'Woe to him that feels not the beauty of these lines!'

The elegiac Muse inspired only a scanty number of our poets, and those only on peculiar occasions; when she suddenly re-appeared, such as she was in the times of Tibullus and Propertius, in the melancholy strains with which blighted and disappointed love inspired the author of 'Eleonore.' The ancients had no idea of the sentiments and expressions which give an inexpressible charm to the plaintive song of Parry, whose happiness was for ever gone. This author has surpassed himself in the songs of the poem of 'Israel and Aslega,' which are real elegies, that are not to be read without shedding tears. Bertin never soared so far, nor is he to be classed among the genuine composers of elegies.

A young favourite of the Muses, who perished before his time, and was cut off in a cruel manner,—one who possessed abilities enough to revive the Grecian pastoral among us,—became also desirous of emulating Tibullus; but, in spite of the praises heaped on him by his admirers on the score of his elegies, the most beautiful of them all, though it carries the title of an idyl, is the piece called 'Le Malade,' a real masterpiece, that describes so well the pangs and agonies, the delirium and melancholy of love.

An interval of short duration, but pregnant with mighty events, now separates us from the epoch at which this young poet perished, to whom we are paying this last tribute of respect. A monarchy of fourteen centuries' standing, fell to the ground in the midst of uproar and confusion, and brought down with it an immense assemblage of abuses, prejudices, and wrongs, the accumulated crust of ages. Europe, enslaved and combined, directed its efforts against one nation, and was defeated by the arms of Liberty; when a man arose, the greatest captain ever recorded, and, making himself the inheritor of all the struggles, efforts and virtues of the Republic, contrived to falsify the wishes of the nation, and gained a series of successes for twenty years unparalleled in history. Suddenly a reverse arrived, and his fall was as rapid and unexpected as his elevation; and the barbarians of the North encamped in the capital of a people, that, like an armed traveller, had made Europe and even Africa resound with his hymns of victory. In the crisis of our glory, our poets, whose imaginations seemed to have been overpowered by the greatness of the subject, were silent; but, in the moments of reverse, the sacred flame of patriotism revived in their bosoms, and the public grief found a vent in the eloquent effusions of their genius. It was in this spirit that the youthful Casimir Delavigne produced his 'Marseillais,' a tribute of sympathy to a great people overwhelmed by the disasters of the day, which would have been converted into an incredible triumph, had not the caprice of fortune betrayed the interests of a mighty genius superior to itself, in the last struggles of its power. In the same way, Beranger came to embrace the statue of his wretched country, and to chaunt her glories in the midst of her triumphant enemies. It may, therefore, be asserted that what Jeremiah said of Jerusalem is not applicable to France, that 'of all those that loved her, not one came to her consolation.'

Such is the effect which great political agitations have generally had in calling forth the highest and noblest exertions, and in compelling them into patriotic exertion. France, however, is the only country where, at present, it can be said to be known. In England it is the least cultivated of all the branches of metrical composition, and we know of no English author who has any pretensions to the name of an elegiac writer.

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

LIFE OF LORD BURGHLEY.

*Memoirs of the Life and Administration of the Right Honourable William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Secretary of State in the Reign of King Edward VI., and Lord High Treasurer of England in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth. Containing an Historical View of the Times in which he lived, and of the many eminent and illustrious Persons with whom he was connected; with Extracts from his Private and Official Correspondence, and other Papers, now first published from the Originals. By the Rev. Edward Nares, D.D., Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Oxford. Ato., pp. 792. Saunders and Otley. London, 1828.*

DOCTOR NARES has undertaken, in the work before us, a task of great use and importance, but one which is of proportionable difficulty. The memoirs of Kings and Statesmen, in whatever age they have lived, form a material part of the history of their times. They require, consequently, the authenticity and the fulness of the general narrative with the particularity of individual biography; and the author who devotes his attention to this species of composition should be in possession, not only of the amplest materials which history may furnish for his Memoir, but also of such matter as may render his work an additional illustration to the pages of history itself. There are, however, two distinct objects, either of which he may with propriety have in view as the principal aim of his writings. He may either compose his work to delineate the character of the individual whose actions he commemorates, in which case it will come under the class of private biographies; or he may send it forth as professedly designed to throw light upon the transactions or events in which the subject of his Memoir was actively engaged, and then it will be properly considered as one of a political or historical nature. These separate objects of writers of this class will necessarily often meet each other, but they may always be sufficiently defined to enable us to class a Memoir with this or that kind of biographical works. The one before us comes, as far as the present volume extends, under the latter species, and may be regarded as hitherto affording a commentary on a particular portion of history, rather than as a life of Secretary Burghley. Considering his work in this light, the learned author has imposed upon himself a labour far surpassing that of ordinary literary undertakings. Elizabeth's Minister was himself a man of great and extraordinary character; but the times in which he lived, and in which his talents were so conspicuously called into action, were still more extraordinary. They were the period of events which agitated not merely our own country, but the whole of continental Europe, and to the influence of which belongs one of the most astonishing revolutions which the world has seen produced both in the opinions and situation of mankind. From the latter half of Henry the Eighth's reign to the firm settlement of Queen Elizabeth on her father's throne, every year was fruitful in important circumstances, and both churchmen and statesmen had their abilities put to the test, in struggles that have, to this day, determined the condition of Protestant Europe. Mankind were awakened from a dream, but they were as yet not certain whether it had spoken truth or falsehood; there were thousands who heard of reformation, as the signal for the destruction of all religion, and of those who promoted it, as of men instigated by the evil spirit of anarchy and atheism. This would have been still more the case, had the change in religion been independent of everything else. But the Reformation was associated, in its spirit and principles, with renovated learning and new political sentiments. The balance had been altogether turned in favour of human freedom, and of emancipation from the trammels which had hitherto held the intellect of mankind in bondage. It was not so much the rising of parties to cure this or that particular evil, as it

was the resurrection of the world from the darkness of a thousand years that was taking place, and the new spirit which animated it, embraced every object on which men place their hopes or conceive to be connected with their destinies. Religious reformation and the gradual alteration of political systems were the great results of this event; but they were so because they comprehended every thing which can engage human attention. Had the new principles been less universal in their tendency, the Court of Rome might have easily satisfied her clamorous opponents; and the Council of Trent, by a little determined attention to the improvement of ecclesiastical discipline, would have greatly retarded all the innovations which it had reason to fear. But the reformation of neither learning, religion, nor government could have been stopped by any partial success in only one of the three. The revival of letters was a most prosperous introduction to the more important one of un abused Christianity; but yet we greatly err, if we regard it in that light alone or suffer ourselves to view it as detached from the mighty revolution which was ensuing. Each improvement, each object of moral or political importance, as it presented itself to men's minds, arose out of the change which had been taking place in the whole system of public opinion. It was this universality of the excitement, this general awakening of attention, that was, in fact, the origin of every subsequent event. Thousands, however, nay, the greatest number, perhaps, of those who gradually embraced the new opinions regarded them, at first, as we have said, with dread and suspicion. They were aroused; they were unsettled in their old opinions; they were convinced of the existence of strong and dangerous error; but it was only the boldest and the sternest-minded that dare at once fix the charge of error on those they had been taught to venerate, or desecrate the men and objects they had held sacred from their youth. It is well observed, therefore, by Doctor Nares, that Luther added liberty to the light which had burst forth; and certainly deserves to be considered, whether or not any of the substantial improvements which modern times have seen, would have taken place without the spur which he gave to the already commenced revolution in public opinion. Learning would, it is probable, have gone on diffusing its light; but it would never have been strong enough to penetrate into the secret holds of private superstition and corruption; and, if it had done away with scholastic logic and philosophy, it might never have been able to confute opinions which had taken hold of men's hearts and imaginations. Luther and his coadjutors spoke to them of things which all could understand, and they shew the truths and errors in opposition which regarded the hopes and welfare of all. The instrument they used, was strong enough for the work of pulling down the fortifications of error. Learning had attacked them with its jewel-hilted weapons; but the reformers came to the charge, coated in iron mail, and armed with battle-axes and battering-rams. But we must let Doctor Nares speak to the truth of the opinion.

'But Luther's opposition to the papal power, being the boldest and most direct that had ever yet occurred, if it happened not to concur exactly in point of time with the first revival of learning, did, fortunately, exact concur with the spirit of inquiry, which the revival of learning had stimulated and provoked. And though the latter, notwithstanding the discovery of printing, might, after all, have been stifled or checked in its course, had no higher principle than the mere desire of knowledge stepped in to its support; though the power of the Emperor and the Pope, intimately combined, which might have been the case, for such purposes, would in all likelihood have easily found means of putting limits to the diffusion of knowledge, on the least appearance of danger to the established authorities in church or state (for such intellectual thralldom is not even now at an end); yet, when called to the aid of a reformation, which struck at the very root of the evil, which threatened the very foundations of a tyrannical



no hard to bear, and which made an appeal to the noblest faculties and highest principles of the human mind, the restoration of letters was calculated to give a surprising force and strength to the reformed party throughout Europe, by enabling it, not only to hold up its head against its opponents, but to loosen, dissolve, and scatter in the air, those visionary chains by which it had hitherto been held captive, the forgeries of the canonists, the servile tenets of the civilians, and, above all, the insidious (because ingenious and plausible) subtleties and sophistry of the schoolmen, especially their casuistical morality. If, as has been well argued, the restoration of letters, beginning amongst the Romanists, brought light, it was Luther's Reformation that brought liberty.

This is not mere matter of conjecture; the case is proved by the sudden alarm taken by the court of Rome, no soon as ever the danger of the "New Learning," as it was called, came to be understood. The restoration of letters appeared to have had its beginning exactly where it was most wanted, if it had but been allowed to take its free course there, as in most favoured places. But, though Italy was the country where the new light began first to spread its rays over a benighted world, and no small progress was made there in the cultivation of literature, before other countries had begun to taste of its salutary and invigorating fruits, yet it seems to have been through an oversight of the Popes, as far as regarded the stability of the papal throne, that it was even suffered to proceed so far. The early reformers, in their appeals to Scripture, often made use of translations that had actually been sanctioned by the Popes. "In surveying this portion of history," says Dr. McCrie, "it is impossible not to admire the arrangements of Providence, when we perceive monks, and bishops, and cardinals, and Popes, active in forging and polishing those weapons which were soon to be turned against themselves, and which they afterwards would fain have blunted, and laboured to decry as unlawful and poisoned." Works were actually printed at Venice, with the privilege (*cum privilegio*) of the *Inquisitors*, strongly favouring some of the reformed doctrines, but which their ignorance prevented their discovering.

There is a letter, said to be still extant, from Cardinal Pole to Leo X., in which, after particularly congratulating his Holiness on his success in the propagation of the sciences, the wary Cardinal does not omit to remind him, that it might be of dangerous consequence to make mankind too learned. Even earlier than this, and in our own country, Rowland Phillips, Vicar of Crofton, and Warden of Merton College, Oxford, "esteemed," as Holinshed says, "a notable preacher," foreseeing the probable consequences of the discovery of the art of printing, had publicly denounced it from the pulpit of St. Paul's Cathedral, as likely to be the bane of the Roman Catholic religion. "We must root out printing," said he, "or printing will root out us." That Leo X., after the example of his father and grandfather, was a promoter of learning, cannot be questioned; it was he who granted a special (though certainly an exclusive) privilege to Aldo, for printing and publishing the Greek and Roman authors; and, though his attention was chiefly confined to the restoration and recovery of the classical writers, for which, indeed, he founded an academy, yet we must not deny him the credit of some attention also to the promotion of theological learning, as may be seen in the dedication of the famous Complutensian Polyglot, by Cardinal Ximenes, addressed to him in 1514. But the alarm began, not with the mere revival of ancient literature, but with what was more emphatically called, the "New Learning;" and the effect of this alarm was very curious. At the period of the Reformation, the heads of the Catholic religion, who had at first discovered nothing in the revival of letters but glory and pleasure, or some tendency towards the refinement of manners, began to perceive their own danger, so that an opposition soon sprang up, where the rigour of Catholic policy would be employed to restrain the operations of the mind, which distinguished such countries greatly, and would distinguish them from those in which no such interposition could avail: this will appear from common history, Italy, Austria, Spain, and the Netherlands, with Saxony, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, England, and Holland. Indeed, after the minds of men in Italy had begun to be awakened to a sense of the corruptions of the Romish church, many political reasons led them to stand up in its defence, as the source of much wealth, drawn from all other parts of Europe.—Vol. pp. 29—32.

With the country in this situation, in regard to the most momentous circumstances that could

influence its destiny, it was no ordinary talents that could stem the tide of opposition which ignorance, superstition, and an incongruous mixture of anarchy and intolerance drove against the bulwarks of national peace. To Lord Burleigh is the praise due of having acted with more patient and determined firmness, in times like these, than other statesmen have possessed in those of no comparative difficulty; of having effected that, by a grave and experienced wisdom, which others would have resorted to craft and subtlety to accomplish; and of having passed his youth, manhood, and old age at court, distinguished, in each period, more for his learning and accomplishments as a statesman, than for his skill and management as a courtier. But this great man had difficulties of the worst kind to cope with; he stood in situations in which the ordinary maxims of state policy served him nothing; he had to control the mischievous designs of one party, and the hasty, untempered zeal of another; and his opinions, both religious and political, were at first those of a new sect, exposed to obloquy and suspicion,—afterwards, of one doomed to suffer the flames of persecution,—and, at length, those of a nation, but of one which it required all wisdom and foresight to keep in the happy situation it had obtained. Both Lord Burleigh's times and character, therefore, while they furnish the biographer with a subject richly deserving his attention, are such as require no ordinary pen to delineate. To say nothing of party prejudices and controversy, which may find food for debate in every chapter of such a work, there is no period or character in history which, either for usefulness or interest, requires more careful study and ability in the writer. Of Dr. Nares' work, public criticism ought, as yet, to give no decided opinion, as the first volume reaches only to the commencement of Lord Burleigh's most eventful career as a statesman. So far as its contents carry us, it appears to have been the result of careful and extensive research into the ample materials which exist for the undertaking. With regard to style and sentiment, it is written, in general, with great vigour and earnestness. Its author has declared in a very excellent and manly preface his opinions, and seems to have written his book in that honest spirit of mind which keeps a man faithful to his own ideas of right, without suffering him willingly and blindly to leave out what makes against his sentiments. We look with anxiety for the remainder of this work, which, we trust, will confirm our ideas of Dr. Nares' qualifications for the undertaking. Its appearance does credit to every party concerned in the publication; and, as forming a valuable addition to former works on the period of which it treats, it deserves to find an immediate place in every good historical library.

#### RECORDS OF WOMAN.

*Records of Woman: with other Poems.* By Felicia Hemans. 12mo. pp. 318. William Blackwood. Edinburgh, 1828.

We have been long wishing to see these exquisite productions of Mrs. Hemans collected into a volume, and they now meet us at the very season best fitted for their appearance. There is something in this lady's poetry which always associates it in our minds with the sweet breathings of summer. It is soft and musical as their gentlest echoes; and not unlike them, because its sweetness and tenderness are sometimes touched with mournfulness. Her images are drawn from all that is fairest and brightest in nature or humanity; and the characters that people her fairy scenes are of the pure and noble-hearted race, alike beautiful in their death and in their love. The spirit that inspires every line, has its impulse from the thoughts of a gentle heart, elevated almost into grandeur by its admiration of a sublime moral purity and greatness; and, read which of her compositions we may, the same delight is manifested in the development of this feeling.

Another striking characteristic of Mrs. Hemans' poetry, is the tone it acquires from the devout love of solitude which uniformly seems to possess its author and inspire her happiest strains. The leafy, deep green shade; the vallies and solitary hills, where the echo and ever-springing fountains have their birth; the isles of the sea, the lone bowery islands of the sea; the river's bank, or the deserted temple:—from haunts like these she has drawn, not merely the illustrations of her verse, but the very spirit of song itself, that seems to have held communion with her in these romantic solitudes. With so many of the characteristics of genuine poetry, there is no doubt the composition of this amiable authoress would have attracted general admiration, had they possessed no higher quality. But it is not either on their mere beauty or pathos they depend, but on their impressive morality. Several other writers may have given occasionally as exquisite delineations of female love, as noble and inspiring pictures of high, self-devoting bravery; but none but the greatest geniuses have ever equalled her, in blending the tenderness of female love with the dignity of all female graces, or the bravery of man with so many of the virtues of patriotism.

In the volume now before us, the highest excellencies of Mrs. Hemans' poetry are displayed in their strongest light. The Records of her own sex, of those who have perished in the devotedness of their souls to their faith and love, furnished her, without fiction, with themes in every way suited to her pen. She has selected those the best adapted to show woman in her loveliest character; and never were the charms of the most exquisite verse strengthened by sentiments more beautiful, or fitter for a pure and an exalted soul. We give the following specimens of this delightful volume: the first, from the 'Records of Woman;' the others, from the minor poems which form the latter part of the collection:

#### The Switzer's Wife.

Nor look nor tone revealeth aught  
Save woman's quietness of thought;  
And yet around her is a light  
Of inward majesty and might.

M. J. J.

Wer solch ein Herz an seinen Basen drückt,  
Der kann fur herd und hof mit freuden fechten.

WILHELM TELL.

'It was the time when children bend to meet  
Their father's homeward step from field or hill,  
And when the herd's returning bells are sweet  
In the Swiss valleys, and the lakes grow still,  
And the last note of that wild horn swells by,  
Which haunts the exile's heart with melody.  
'And lovely smiled full many an Alpine home,  
Touched with the crimson of the dying hour,  
Which lit its low roof by the torrent's foam,  
And pierced its lattice thro' the vine-hung bower;  
But one, the loveliest o'er the land that rose,  
Then first look'd mournful in its green repose.  
'For Werner sat beneath the linden-tree,  
That sent its lulling whispers through his door,  
Ev'n as man sits whose heart alone would be  
With some deep care, and thus can find no more  
Th' accustomed joy in all which evening brings,  
Gathering a household with her quiet wings.  
'His wife stood hush'd before him,—sad, yet mild  
In her beseeching mien;—he mark'd it not.  
The silvery laughter of his bright-hair'd child  
Rang from the greensward round the shelter'd spot,  
But seem'd unheard; until at last the boy  
Raised from his heap'd up flowers a glance of joy,  
'And met his father's face: but then a change  
Pass'd swiftly o'er the brow of infant gleam,  
And a quick sense of something dimly strange  
Brought him from play to stand beside the knee  
So often climb'd, and lift his loving eyes  
That shone through clouds of sorrowful surprise.  
'Then the proud bosom of the strong man shook;  
But tenderly his babe's fair mother laid  
Her hand on his, and with a pleading look,  
Thro' tears half quivering, o'er him bent, and said,  
"What grief, dear friend, hath made thy heart its prey,  
That thou shouldst turn thee from our love away?"

"It is too sad to see thee thus, my friend!  
Mark'st thou the wonder on thy boy's fair brow,  
Missing the smile from thine? Oh! cheer thee! bend  
To his soft arms, unseal thy thoughts e'en now!  
Thou dost not kindly to withhold the share  
Of tried affection in thy secret care."

"He looked up into that sweet earnest face,  
But sternly, mournfully: not yet the band  
Was loosen'd from his soul; its inmost place  
Not yet unveil'd by love's o'er-mastering band.  
"Speak low!" he cried, and pointed where on high,  
The white Alps glitter'd thro' the solemn sky:

"We must speak low amidst our ancient hills  
And their free torrents; for the days are come  
When tyranny lies couch'd by forest-rills,  
And meets the shepherd in his mountain-home.  
Go, pour the wine of our own grapes in fear,  
Keep silence by the hearth! its foci are near."

"The envy of th' oppressor's eye hath been  
Upon my heritage. I sit to-night  
Under my household tree, if not serene,  
Yet with the faces best-beloved in sight:

To-morrow eve may find me chain'd, and thee—  
How can I bear the boy's young smiles to see?"

"The bright blood left that youthful mother's cheek;  
Back on the linden-stem she lean'd her form,  
And her lip trembled, as it strove to speak,  
Like a frail harp-string, shaken by the storm."

"Twas but a moment, and the faintness pass'd,  
And the free Alpine spirit woke at last.  
"And she, that ever thro' her home had moved  
With the meek thoughtfulness and quiet smile  
Of woman, calmly loving and beloved,  
And timid in her happiness the while,  
Stood brightly forth, and steadfastly that hour,  
Her clear glance kindling into sudden power."

"Ay pale she stood, but with an eye of light,  
And took her fair child to her holy breast,  
And lifted her soft voice, that gather'd might  
As it found language:—"Are we thus oppress'd?"  
Then must we rise upon our mountain-sod,  
And man must arm, and woman call on God!"

"I know what thou wouldst do,—and be it done!  
Thy soul is darken'd with its fears for me.  
Trust me to Heaven, my husband, this, thy son,  
The babe whom I have born thee, must be free!  
And the sweet memory of our pleasant hearth  
May well give strength—if aught be strong on earth."

"Thou hast been brooding o'er the silent dread  
Of my desponding tears; now lift once more,  
My hunter of the hills! thy stately head,  
And let thine eagle glance my joy restore!  
I can bear all, but seeing thee subdued,—  
Take to thee back thine own undaunted mood."

"Go forth beside the waters, and along  
The Chamois-path, and thro' the forests go;  
And tell, in burning words, thy tale of wrong  
To the brave hearts that midst the hamlets glow.  
God shall be with thee, my beloved!—Away!  
Bless but thy child, and leave me,—I can pray!"

"He sprang up like a warrior-youth awaking  
To clarion-sounds upon the ringing air;  
He caught her to his breast, while proud tears, breaking  
From his dark eyes, fell o'er her braided hair,—  
And "Worthy art thou," was his joyous cry,  
"That man for thee should gird himself to die."

"My bride, my wife, the mother of my child!  
Now shall thy name be armour to my heart;  
And this our land, by chains no more defiled,  
Be taught of thee to choose the better part!  
I go—thy spirit on my words shall dwell,  
Thy gentle voice shall stir the Alps—Farewell!"

"And thus they parted by the quiet lake,  
In the clear starlight: he, the strength to rouse  
Of the free hills; she, thoughtful for his sake,  
To rock her child beneath the whispering boughs,  
Singing its blue, half-curtain'd eyes to sleep,  
With a low hymn, amidst the stillness deep."

*The Spirit's Mysteries.*  
And slight, withal, may be the things which bring  
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling  
Aside for ever—it may be a sound—  
A tone of music—summer's breath, or spring—  
A flower—a leaf—the ocean—which may wound—  
Striking th' electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound.

*Child Harold.*  
"The power that dwelleth in sweet sounds to waken  
Vague yearnings, like the sailor's for the shore,  
And dim remembrances, whose hue seems taken  
From some bright former state, our own no more;

Is not this all a mystery?—Who shall say  
Whence are those thoughts, and whither tends their  
way?"

"The sudden images of vanish'd things,  
That o'er the spirit flash, we know not why;  
Tones from some broken harp's deserted strings,  
Warm sunset hues of summers long gone by,  
A rippling wave—the dashing of an oar—  
A flower scent floating past our parents' door;

"A word—scarce noted in its hour perchance,  
Yet back returning with a plaintive tone;  
A smile—a sunny or a mournful glance,  
Full of sweet meanings now from this world flown;  
Are not these mysteries when to life they start,  
And press vain tears in gushes from the heart?"

"And the far wanderings of the soul in dreams,  
Calling up shrouded faces from the dead,  
And with them bringing soft or solemn gleams,  
Familiar objects brightly to o'erstep;  
And waking buried love, or joy, or fear,—  
These are night's mysteries—who shall make them  
clear?"

"And the strange inborn sense of coming ill,  
That oftentimes whispers to the haunted breast,  
In a low tone which thought can drown or still,  
Midst feasts and melodies a secret guest:  
Whence doth that murmur wake, that shadow fall?  
Why shakes the spirit thus?—'tis mystery all!"

"Darkly we move—we press upon the brink  
Haply of viewless worlds, and know it not;  
Yes! it may be, that nearer than we think  
Are those whom death has parted from our lot!  
Fearfully, wondrously, our souls are made—  
Let us walk humbly on, but undismay'd!"

"Humbly—for knowledge strives in vain to feel  
Her way amidst these marvels of the mind;  
Yet undismay'd—for do they not reveal  
Th' immortal being with our dust entwined?—  
So let us deem! and e'en the tears they wake  
Shall then be blest, for that high nature's sake."

*The Sunbeam.*  
"Thou art no lingerer in monarch's hall,  
A joy thou art, and a wealth to all!  
A bearer of hope unto land and sea—  
Sunbeam! what gift hath the world like thee?"

"Thou art walking the billows, and ocean smiles—  
Thou hast touch'd with glory his thousand isles;  
Thou hast lit up the ships, and the feathery foam,  
And gladden'd the sailor, like words from home."

"To the solemn depths of the forest shades,  
Thou art streaming on thro' their green arcades,  
And the quivering leaves that have caught thy glow,  
Like fire-flies glance to the pools below."

"I look'd on the mountains—a vapour lay  
Folding their heights in its dark array:  
Thou brakest forth—and the mist became  
A crown and a mantle of living flame."

"I look'd on the peasant's lowly cot—  
Something of sadness had wrapt the spot;—  
But a gleam of thee on its lattice fell,  
And it laugh'd into beauty at that bright spell."

"To the earth's wild places a guest thou art,  
Flushing the waste like the rose's heart;  
And thou scornest not from thy pomp to shed  
A tender smile on the ruin's head."

"Thou tak'st thro' the dim church-aisle thy way,  
And its pillars from twilight flash forth to day,  
And its high pale tombs, with their trophies old,  
Are bath'd in a flood of as molten gold."

"And thou turnest not from the humblest grave,  
Where a flower to the sighing winds may wave;  
Thou scatterest its gloom like the dreams of rest,  
Thou sleepest in love on its grassy breast."

"Sunbeam of summer! oh! what is like thee?  
Hope of the wilderness, joy of the sea!—  
One thing is like thee to mortals given,  
The faith touching all things with hues of heaven!"

#### THE PENINSULAR WAR.

[Concluded from page 434.]

THE whole history of this campaign is full of the most important lessons: it was in this school of adversity that our officers first learnt what it was to be soldiers. Most deeply we lament that their able master did not live to see the fruits of his discipline, and to confound the malice of his

detractors; it would sooner have been known, that, though a more fortunate leader has reaped and deserved the full harvest of glory, it was Sir John Moore who sowed the seeds of success, by the system which he introduced into the service. It is true that the first workings of that system were broken in upon in his last campaign; but he is not the less entitled to its merit, because the incapacity of others rendered it abortive.

We cannot follow our noble author through all his subsequent details; the reader will find him accurate in his facts, generally frank in his confessions, and always lively in his descriptions.

He sketches his battles well, as one who has fought, and yet feels, while he only wields the pen, no inconsiderable portion of the excitement which he experienced when he brandished the sabre. The victory of Vimero is, therefore, described in a bold and animated style, of which we will give an example:

"In the mean while, a tremendous contest was going on among the hills, on the British right, and in the direction of the Lourinho road. The enemy forced their way in this quarter, as they had done on the other flank, through the body of skirmishers which covered the British line; nor did they make the slightest pause, till they beheld the 36th, the 40th, and 71st regiments in close array before them. Their line was likewise formed in a moment; and several terrible discharges of musketry were exchanged at a distance, which hardly allowed of a single bullet passing wide of its mark. At length, the 82d and 29th regiments came up to the support of their comrades, and the word was given to charge. One cheer, loud, regular, and appalling, warned the French of what they had to expect; but the French were men of tried valour, and they stood to the last. That was a tremendous onset. The entire front rank of the enemy perished; and the men who composed it were found, at the close of the action, lying on the very spots where each, during its continuance, had stood. Instantly the line gave way; and, being pursued with great impetuosity, six pieces of cannon were captured on the field. An attempt was, indeed, made to recover these, at a moment when the 71st and 82d, who had halted in the valley, were lying down to rest after their labours; but it was made to no purpose. These regiments only fell back to a little rising ground, from whence their fire could be given with greater effect; they gave it, and, once more bringing the bayonet into play, carried every thing before them."

"The French fought well in this action. They fought like men who had been accustomed to conquer, and had not yet learned to suffer defeat. The grenadiers of their reserve, in particular, performed prodigies of valour, advancing under a cross fire of musketry and cannon, and never giving way till the bayonets of the British troops drove them down the descent. But they were routed at all points, and that with a slaughter far greater than usually occurs to armies of a similar magnitude. Out of twelve or thirteen thousand men, whom they brought into the field, three or four thousand fell; besides a large proportion of prisoners, of whom several were prisoners of rank. On the side of the British, the total loss amounted to 783, in killed, wounded, and missing; among the former of whom was Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor, commanding the 20th Light Dragoons. He was shot through the heart whilst leading a brilliant charge which his detachment made; and in which, after committing terrible havoc among the enemy's infantry, it suddenly found itself beset by a whole brigade of French cavalry.—*Lord Londonderry*, pp. 117—119.

At this time, especially, it is interesting to be informed on the subject of the Spanish and Portuguese characters, and, therefore, we subjoin the accounts given by two observers; if called upon for our own, we should probably differ in a few points, giving to the Spaniard some advantages in the comparison, throwing out of our consideration the unpleasant remembrances of denied rations, and attributing the character and credit gained by the Portuguese to the credit which they, from greater intimacy, gave to us and our character. The Spaniards had for ages been our enemies, and could not in a day convert hereditary hatred into cordial confidence;—the Portuguese had been our constant allies, or more constant dependents, were in the habit of looking



so us for support, and threw themselves almost unreservedly on our protection; the knowledge of their weakness became the source of their strength. Not so with their prouder neighbours; hence, most officers, looking only to a disagreeable result, and not to its honourable cause, have lauded the Portuguese, because they disliked the Spaniards.

Lord Londonderry then describes his passage of the frontiers between the two kingdoms:

‘Having halted at Elvas during the night, we marched next morning soon after dawn, and, passing through a plain of considerable extent, crossed the Guadiana at Badajoz, the capital of Estremadura. This movement introduced us at once into Spain; and the contrast, both in personal appearance and in manners, between the people of the two nations, which was instantly presented to us, I shall not readily forget. Generally speaking, the natives of frontier districts partake almost as much of the character of one nation as of another; the distinctions between them become, as it were, gradually blended, till they totally disappear. It is not so on the borders of Spain and Portugal. The peasant who cultivates his little field, or tends his flock, on the right bank of the Guadiana, is, in all his habits and notions, a different being from the peasant who pursues similar occupations on its left bank: the first is a genuine Portuguese—the last, a genuine Spaniard. Nor are they more like to each other in their amities than in their manners. They cordially detest one another; inasmuch, that their common wrongs, and their common enmity to the French, were not sufficient, even at this time, to eradicate the feeling.

‘It was not, however, by the striking diversity of private character alone which subsisted between them, that we were made sensible, as soon as we had passed the Guadiana, that a new nation was before us. The Spaniards received us with a degree of indifference, to which we had not hitherto been accustomed. They were certainly not uncivil; they poured no execrations upon us; nor did they hoot, or rudely annoy us; but they gave themselves no trouble to evince to us, in any way, their satisfaction at our arrival. Whatever we required they gave us, in return for our money; but, as to enthusiasm, or a desire to anticipate our wants, there was not the shadow of an appearance of any thing of the kind about them. How different all this from the poor Portuguese, who never failed to rend the air with their *cantos*, and were at all times full of promises and protestations, no matter how incapable they might be of fulfilling the one, or of authenticating the other! The truth is, that the Spaniard is a proud, independent, and grave personage, possessing many excellent qualities, but quite conscious of their existence, and not unapt to overrate them. On the present occasion, too, they seemed to be more than ordinarily self-important, in consequence of their achievements; they were quick to take offence even where none was intended, and not indisposed to provoke, or engage in broils with our soldiers. Not that any serious disturbance occurred during our stay; the discipline preserved in our own ranks was too good to permit it; but numberless little incidents were continually taking place, which served sufficiently to make us aware of the spirit which actuated the natives. Yet, with all this, there was much about the air and manner of the Spaniards to deserve and command our regard. The Portuguese are a people that require rousing; they are indolent, lazy, and generally helpless; we may value these our faithful allies, and render them useful; but it is impossible highly to respect them. In the Spanish character, on the contrary, there is mixed up, with a great deal of haughtiness, a sort of manly independence, which you cannot but admire, even though aware that it will render them by many degrees less amenable to your wishes than their neighbours.’—Lord Londonderry, pp. 151—153.

Colonel Napier's description is yet more *transparent*, and serves as a key to much of his subsequent argument:

‘The Spanish character, with relation to public affairs, is distinguished by inordinate pride and arrogance. Dilatory and improvident, the individual as well as the mass, all possess an absurd confidence, that every thing is practicable which their heated imagination suggests; once excited, they can see no difficulty in the execution of a project, and the obstacles they encounter are attributed to treachery; hence the sudden murder of so many virtuous men at the commencement of this commotion. Kind and warm in his attach-

ments, but bitter in his anger, the Spaniard is patient under privations, firm in bodily suffering, prone to sudden passion, vindictive, and bloody; remembering insult longer than injury, and cruel in his revenge. With a strong natural perception of what is noble, his promise is lofty; but, as he invariably permits his passions to get the mastery of his reason, his performance is mean.

‘In the progress of this war, the tenacity of vengeance peculiar to the nation, supplied the want of cool, persevering intrepidity; but it was a poor substitute for that essential quality, and led rather to deeds of craft and cruelty, than to daring acts of patriotism. Now, the abstraction of the Royal family, and the unexpected pretension to the crown, so insultingly put forth by Napoleon, aroused all the Spanish pride.

‘The tumults of Madrid and Aranjuez had agitated the public mind, and prepared it for a violent movement; and the protection afforded by the French to the obnoxious Godoy, increased the ferment of popular feeling: a dearly-cherished vengeance was thus frustrated, at the moment of its expected accomplishment, and the disappointment excited all that fierceness of anger which, with the Spaniards, is, for the moment, uncontrollable.

‘Just then, the tumult of Madrid, swollen and distorted, wrought the people to frenzy, and they rose with one accord, not to meet a danger, the extent of which they had calculated, and were prepared, for the sake of independence, to confront, but to gratify the fury of their hearts, and to slake their thirst of blood.’—Napier, pp. 38, 39.

But the space already occupied, reminds us that we must draw to a close; much remains on which we would willingly comment; and, if we consulted our inclination only, we should continue to make Colonel Napier's History a running comment on Lord Londonderry's Narrative; but our unmilitary readers have a claim on us for variety, and we must therefore content ourselves, for the present, with recommending both works to the attentive perusal of our professional readers. In point of type, paper, and margin, the publisher of our quarto has done his duty; but we must hold him responsible for the map, apparently printed in the infancy of lithography, which is prefixed to a volume of which it is utterly unworthy; a more indistinct chart never puzzled an inspector: it does no credit to the English press, and we are almost induced to suspect that it is of foreign origin. The author must take some share of this blame. The map of a campaign should never be crammed by the insertion of secondary places, which are unconnected with the movements of the troops: it is enough that great cities are marked as points of bearing; minuteness should be reserved for the lines of march and the *champs de bataille*, that the eye of the reader may fix upon them at once; and these, again, should be repeated on separate and enlarged scales, whenever the work is intended for military instruction.\* The Marquis has only afforded us six plans, each of which, or its counterpart, if we are not much mistaken, has been common in the print-shops; but they do not include one which we certainly expected to find in the work of an Adjutant-General. There is no plan of the lines of Torres Vedras, no detail of the forces occupying them, or of their distribution; this, in a work purporting to be intended for the instruction of young officers, and especially for the information of those lately sent to Portugal, is an unpardonable omission. Lord Londonderry was well aware of the importance of this position, and ought to have furnished his readers with the means of estimating and understanding its strength. In lieu of this, we have some twenty or thirty pages of returns of casualties, all of which either have been gazetted, or are of too little importance for special notice. Authors ought not to be encouraged in emptying their portfolios by way of appendix, nor booksellers in enlarging their volumes by this superfluous matter. In the instance before us, the addition bears so small a proportion to the

\* The work of Colonel Napier has several very useful and well-executed plans on this system.

work, that we should not have specially noticed it, but for the palpable omission to which it was necessary to draw attention. We will take the opportunity, however, of advising all military writers to consult compactness in the composition of their works, both as relates to the writing and the printing. ‘Present yourselves to the public in close column—the critics will deploy you.’

We have thus passed Lord Londonderry in review, in quicker time than the regulation prescribes for movements of parade, but yet in that which will best suit his habits and school of study. We heartily wish that there were more of the Tenth who could be ‘trotted out’ on similar occasions; perhaps others of this distinguished corps may be encouraged to follow hereafter the example of their gallant colonel; it will be well for them to know, that the studies of a scholar are not inconsistent with the character of a soldier or the habits of a gentleman.

A word now to commanding officers generally: it has been their habit to neglect, if not to discourage, literary talent in their junior officers. A man who could write has usually been considered, if under the rank of a field-officer, as little better than an incendiary: the ordinary run of lieutenant-colonels dread the presence of a well-informed subaltern, as a reproach on their own want of acquirement. Nor does their objection extend to polite or classical learning only: it is a point of faith with the minor part of our martinets, that military talent is only to be acquired by experience, that nothing is learnt in books but pedantry and impertinence, that the amount of a man's capacity must be measured by the date and nature of his commission. Nor is this feeling confined to those mere soldiers, who, previous to 1810, for the most part, commanded our regiments. There were a few instances of superior officers, who, though themselves possessed of some talent and military learning, yet, from a feeling of jealousy, discouraged in their subalterns those very acquirements, of the value of which they must have been personally conscious. We could name a General, now in very high command in the Mediterranean, in whose practice, and disposition of patronage, this vice was peculiarly conspicuous. By this time, perhaps, he may have seen his error, and may be convinced that it is more honourable to a leader to be surrounded by talent, than to shine by contrast of neighbouring darkness. Real gems require no foils.

We hope yet to see the day, when it shall be part of the instructions of a reviewing General to inquire into the talents of the junior officers; not only to ask whether they have got the books required by regulation, but whether they understand them; to make a return of linguists, draughtsmen, and mathematicians; and that, from such only as had been reported for proficiency, should be selected the officers for staff appointments. Such a system might break in upon patronage, but it would greatly forward the interest and honour of the service.

Even the work before us, strange as it may seem, is said to illustrate the neglect of unpatronised talent in our army; but, as the report is vague, we will not lightly accuse the noble Marquis of hoisting false colours.

PELHAM.

*Pelham, or the Adventures of a Gentleman.* 3 Vols. post 8vo. pp. 366. Colburn. London, 1828.

SO MANY are the novels at present issued from the press, that it is not more difficult for an author to find a new plot, than for a reviewer to use new expressions in giving their several characters. Pelham is a very super-or novel, but it is of the same class as many scores of others; and its only characteristic difference is, that its author has done that well which those of the others do weakly and badly; that the personages described, seem living instead of fictitious beings, and the dialogue taken from the *vind voce* correspondence of real men and real women, instead of being

made up out of the boarding-school dreams of the author or authoress. This difference is a very important one, of course; and the author must be commended for having done—what it is undeniably very difficult to do—given a series of fashionable portraits, and preserved the fashionable air of the originals without, in this part of the work, degenerating into tameness or insipidity. With so much liveliness of description, and a dialogue which is occasionally even brilliant, there is little doubt this novel will soon become a favourite of its class. This, however, must not hinder the expression of our regret, that so many of its pages should be devoted to several displays of its hero, which are sometimes the very essence of silliness, and might have been left out without any detriment to the development of the character. But objections of this kind, we fear, according to the present style of such works, will weigh little either with authors or readers; and the eternal cant words of 'light reading,' and 'fashionable display,' seem to have persuaded some people of even moderate good sense, that they refer to something else than mock conversations of people of rank, or descriptions of scenes, that, if they ever existed, ought never to have been described. We trust such writers as the author of 'Pelham,' will be soon convinced of the folly of ministering to a taste in the public which has been created, partly by a bad condition of society, and partly by the labour of writers, who, not being possessed of sufficient genius for the composition of works of genuine imagination, have endeavoured to write themselves into notice, by the use of means which the passions or inexperience of their readers can alone render successful. Let a few authors of real good sense and ability employ themselves in writing naturally, and describing human character, without clothing it either in foppery or harlotry, and far more than half the novels which have been circulated through society, as worthy of praise and attention, will be left to merited oblivion. But we turn to the work before us, from which we had selected specimens of the powerful style in which the author has delineated character, but the following chapter is so truly humorous, that we are induced to give it, entire, in preference to the smaller extracts we had intended taking. It describes the adventure of Pelham's French tutor, in Paris, whose portrait may be gathered from the hints given in the scene.

"We took our way to the street in which Madame Laurent resided. Meanwhile suffer me to get rid of myself, and to introduce you, dear reader, to my friend Monsieur Margot, the whole of whose adventures were subsequently detailed to me by the garrulous Mrs. Green.

"At the hour appointed he knocked at the door of my fair countrywoman, and was carefully admitted. He was attired in a dressing-gown of sea-green silk, in which his long, lean, hungry body, looked more like a river pike than any thing human.

"Madame," said he, with a solemn air, "I return you my best thanks for the honour you have done me—behold me at your feet!" and so saying the lean lover gravely knelt down on one knee.

"Rise, Sir," said Mrs. Green, "I confess that you have won my heart; but that is not all—you have yet to show that you are worthy of the opinion I have formed of you. It is not, Monsieur Margot, your person that has won me—no! it is your chivalrous and noble sentiments—prove that these are genuine, and you may command all from my admiration."

"In what manner shall I prove it, Madame," said Monsieur Margot, rising, and gracefully drawing his sea-green gown more closely round him.

"By your courage, your devotion, and your gallantry! I ask but one proof—you can give it me on the spot. You remember, Monsieur, that, in the days of romance, a lady threw her glove upon the stage on which a lion was exhibited, and told her lover to pick it up. Monsieur Margot, the trial to which I shall put you is less severe. Look, (and Mrs. Green threw open the window)—look, I throw my glove out into the street—descend for it."

"Your commands are my law," said the romantic

Margot. "I will go forthwith," and so saying, he went to the door.

"Hold, Sir!" said the lady, "it is not by that simple manner that you are to descend—you must go the same way as my glove, out of the window!"

"Out of the window, Madame!" said Monsieur Margot, with astonished solemnity; "that is impossible, because this apartment is three stories high, and consequently I shall be dashed to pieces."

"By no means," answered the dame; "in that corner of the room there is a basket, to which (already foreseeing your determination) I have affixed a rope; by that basket you shall descend. See Monsieur, what expedients a provident love can suggest."

"H—e—m!" said, very slowly, Monsieur Margot, by no means liking the airy voyage imposed upon him; "but the rope may break, or your hand may suffer it to slip."

"Feel the rope," cried the lady, "to satisfy you as to your first doubt; and, as to the second, can you—can you imagine that my affections would not make me twice as careful of your person as of my own. Fie! ungrateful Monsieur Margot! fie!"

The melancholy chevalier cast a rueful look at the basket. "Madame," said he, "I own that I am very averse to the plan you propose: suffer me to go down stairs in the ordinary way; your glove can be as easily picked up whether your adorer goes out of the door or the window. It is only, Madame, when ordinary means fail that we should have recourse to the extra-ordinary."

"Begone, Sir!" exclaimed Mrs. Green; "be-gone! I now perceive that your chivalry was only a pretence. Fool that I was to love you as I have done—fool that I was to imagine a hero where I now find a—"

"Pause, Madame, I will obey you—my heart is firm—see that the rope is—"

"Gallant Monsieur Margot!" cried the lady; and, going to her dressing-room, she called her woman to her assistance. The rope was of the most unquestionable thickness, the basket of the most capacious dimensions. The former was fastened to a strong hook—and the latter lowered.

"I go, Madame," said Monsieur Margot, feeling the rope; "but it really is a most dangerous exploit."

"Go, Monsieur! and the God of St. Louis be-friend you!"

"Stop!" said Monsieur Margot, "let me fetch my coat; the night is cold, and my dressing-gown thin."

"Nay, nay, my Chevalier," returned the dame, "I love you in that gown: it gives you an air of grace and dignity, quite enchanting."

"It will give me my death of cold, Madame!" said Monsieur Margot, earnestly.

"Bah!" said the Englishwoman: "what knight ever feared cold? Besides, you mistake; the night is warm, and you look so handsome in your gown."

"Do!" said the vain Monsieur Margot, with an iron expression of satisfaction; "if that is the case, I will mind it less; but may I return by the door?"

"Yes," replied the lady; "you see that I do not require too much from your devotion—enter."

"Behold me!" said the French master, inserting his body into the basket, which immediately began to descend.

The hour and the police of course made the street empty; the lady's handkerchief waved in token of encouragement and triumph. When the basket was within five yards of the ground, Mrs. Green cried to her lover, who had hitherto been elevating his serious countenance towards her, in sober yet gallant sadness—

"Look, look, Monsieur—straight before you."

The lover turned round, as rapidly as his habits would allow him, and at that instant the window was shut, the light extinguished, and the basket arrested. There stood Monsieur Margot, upright in the basket, and there stopped the basket, motionless in the air.

What were the exact reflections of Monsieur Margot, in that position, I cannot pretend to determine, because he never favoured me with them; but, about an hour afterwards, Vincent and I (who had been delayed on the road) strolling up the street, according to our appointment, perceived, by the dim lamps, some opaque body leaning against the wall of Madame Laurent's house, at about the distance of fifteen feet from the ground.

We hastened our steps towards it; a measured and serious voice, which I well knew, accosted us—

"For God's sake, gentlemen, procure me assist-

ance; I am the victim of a perfidious woman, and expect every moment to be precipitated to the earth."

"Good heavens!" said I, "surely it is Monsieur Margot, whom I hear. What are you doing there?"

"Shivering with cold," answered Monsieur Margot, in a tone tremulously slow.

"But what are you in? for I can see nothing but a dark substance."

"I am in a basket," replied Monsieur Margot, "and I should be very much obliged to you to let me out of it."

"Well—indeed," said Vincent, (for I was too much engaged in laughing to give a ready reply), "your *château-Margot* has but a cool cellar. But there are some things in the world easier said than done. How are we to remove you to a more desirable place?"

"Ah," returned Monsieur Margot, "how, indeed! There is to be sure a ladder in the porter's lodge long enough to deliver me; but then, think of the gibes and jeers of the porter—it will get wind—and, what is worse, I shall lose my pupils."

"My good friend," said I, "you had better lose your pupils than your life; and the day-light will soon come, and then, instead of being ridiculed by the porter, you will be ridiculed by the whole street!"

Monsieur Margot groaned. "Go, then, my friend," said he, "procure the ladder! Oh, those she-devils—what could make me such a fool?"

While Monsieur Margot was venting his spleen in a scarcely articulate mutter, we repaired to the lodge—knocked up the porter, communicated the accident, and procured the ladder. However, an observant eye had been kept upon our proceedings, and the window above was re-opened, though so silently that I only perceived the action. The porter, a jolly, bluff, hearty-looking fellow, stood grinning below with a lantern, while we set the ladder (which only just reached the basket) against the wall.

The chevalier looked wistfully forth, and then, by the light of the lantern, we had a fair view of his ridiculous figure—his teeth chattered woefully, and the united cold without and anxiety within, threw a double sadness and solemnity upon his withered countenance: the night was very windy, and every instant a rapid current seized the unhappy sea-green vesture, whirling it in the air, and threw it, as if in scorn, over the very face of the unhappy professor. The constant recurrence of this sportive irreverence of the gales, the high sides of the basket, and the trembling agitation of the inmate, never too agile, rendered it a work of some time for Monsieur Margot to transfer himself from the basket to the ladder; at length, he had fairly got out one thin, shivering leg.

"Thank God!" said the pious professor—what at that instant the thanksgiving was checked, and, to Monsieur Margot's inexpressible astonishment and dismay, the basket rose five feet from the ladder, leaving its tenant with one leg dangling out, like a flag from a balloon.

The ascent was too rapid to allow Monsieur Margot even time for an exclamation, and it was not till he had sufficient leisure in his present elevation to perceive all its consequences, that he found words to say, with the most earnest tone of thoughtful lamentation, "One could not have foreseen this!—it is really extremely distressing—would to God that I could get my leg in, or my body out!"

While we were yet too convulsed with laughter to make any comment upon the unlooked-for ascent of the luminous Monsieur Margot, the basket descended with such force as to dash the lantern out of the hand of the porter, and to bring the professor so precipitously to the ground, that all the bones in his skin rattled audibly!

"My God!" said he, "I am done for!—be witness how inhumanly I have been murdered."

We pulled him out of the basket, and carried him between us into the porter's lodge; but the woes of Monsieur Margot were not yet at their termination. The room was crowded. There was Madame Laurent—there was the German count, whom the professor was teaching French—there was the French viscount, whom he was teaching German—there were all his fellow-lodgers—the ladies whom he had boasted of—the men he had boasted to—Don Juan, in the infernal regions, could not have met with a more unwelcome set of old acquaintance than Monsieur Margot had the happiness of opening his bewildered eyes upon in the porter's lodge.

"What!" cried they all, "Monsieur Margot, that you who have been frightening us so? We thought



the house was attacked; the Russian general is at this very moment loading his pistols; lucky for you that you did not choose to stay longer in that situation. Pray, Monsieur, what could induce you to exhibit yourself so, in your dressing-gown too, and the night so cold? An't you ashamed of yourself?"

"All this, and infinitely more, was levelled against the miserable professor, who stood shivering with cold and fright, and turning his eyes first upon one, and then on another, as the exclamation circulated round the room.

"I do assure you," at length he began.

"No, no," cried one, "it is of no use explaining now!"

"Mais, Messieurs," querulously recommenced the unhappy Margot.

"Hold your tongue," exclaimed Madame Laurent, "you have been disgracing my house."

"Mais, Madame, écoutez-moi—"

"No, no," cried the German, "we saw you—we saw you."

"Mais, Monsieur Le Comte—"

"Fie, fie," cried the Frenchman.

"Mais, Monsieur Le Vicomte—"

"At this every mouth was opened, and, the patience of Monsieur Margot being by this time exhausted, he flew into a violent rage—his tormentors pretended an equal indignation, and at length he fought his way out of the room, as fast as his shattered bones would allow him, followed by the whole body, screaming, and shouting, and scolding, and laughing after him.

The next morning passed without my usual lesson from Monsieur Margot; that was natural enough; but, when the next day, and the next, rolled on, and brought neither Monsieur Margot nor his excuse, I began to be uneasy for the poor man. Accordingly, I sent to Madame Laurent's to inquire after him: judge of my surprise at hearing he had, early the day after his adventure, left his lodgings with his small possession of books and clothes, leaving only a note to Madame Laurent, enclosing the amount of his debt to her, and that none had since seen or heard of him.

From that day to this I have never once beheld him. The poor professor lost even the little money due to him for his lesson—so true is it, that, in a man of Monsieur Margot's temper, even interest is a subordinate passion to vanity.

MEXICO IN 1827.

Mexico in 1827. By H. G. Ward, Esq., his Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires in that Country, during the years 1825, 1826, and part of 1827. 2 vols., 8vo. pp. 1321, with maps and plates. Colburn. London, 1828.

Owing to its insulated situation from the different states of Europe, and its possession of a naval force, which lays the world under tribute, England, while it is engrossed by industry and commerce, is also indebted to its geographical position, as well as the eager and ardent passion for riches which influences its population, for that strong propensity for distant voyages and travels, which is a uniform characteristic of its inhabitants. There is scarcely a family in the three kingdoms, some of the members of which are not dispersed over the different regions of the globe. An Englishman speaks in the same style about a voyage to India, as a Parisian talks of an excursion to St. Cloud, or a citizen of Rome, of a trip to his villa. Hence arise the numerous publications of voyages, that appear every day, descriptive of distant and unknown countries. Parry and Franklin penetrate to the frozen regions of the north, while Weddell is engaged in discovering a new ocean in the other extremity of the world. Cruise visits the almost unknown inhabitants of New Zealand; and Anderson, the cannibal hordes of the shores of Sumatra. Dupuis proceeds to study the savage tribes of the Ashantees; Clapperton, Denham, and Laing, explore the still mysterious course of the Niger. Gray pursues his travels on the burning sands of Western Africa; while the Rev. Dr. Philip takes up his abode among the native Hottentots. Finlayson traverses the opulent regions of Southern Asia; the missionary Ellis, conveys the Holy Scriptures to the idolaters of the Sandwich Isles. Frazer inspects the habits and man-

ners of the nomad population of Korasan, under the hospitable tent of the Turcoman of the desert; Duncan describes the frozen tracts of Upper-Canada. Leake, the classic lands of Asia-Minor; Buckingham, that cradle of the creation, the Plains of Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia, which so strongly recal to our recollection the earliest history of mankind. Finally, Proctor, Mathison, Stephenson, Cochrane, Caldeleugh, Miers, Hamilton, Head, Andrews, and Lyon, make us acquainted with the rising and glorious republics of the New Hemisphere.

It is, we must observe, more especially within a few years that publications of this kind have multiplied upon us beyond any former example. The general peace that has prevailed in Europe during the last twelve years, has proved favourable to scientific expeditions; and the recognition of the Republics of South America could not fail to invite numerous visitors to that distant continent. Unfortunately, few of these travellers were men of science; they were, generally speaking, men engrossed by projects of commerce and industry, instigated by the allurements of lucre and the hope of fortune; and their publications display more of the writer of romance than of the publicist, and more of the speculating merchant than of the inquisitive philanthropist. Accordingly, their works are frequently full of curious details about men and things; but it will be in vain to look for any of those comprehensive observations which distinguish the philosophic traveller, or those scientific researches which are to be met with in the books of the profound and contemplative observer. The mere external state of these Republics is exhibited to the reader with a sufficient degree of exactness; but, either from carelessness or want of information, the author fails to describe their internal organisation, their hidden resources, their approaching development, and their future magnitude. The late publication of Mr. Ward, though far superior to these productions, nevertheless affords, in some points, a fresh proof of the justice of this criticism.

Yet what country more than South America feels the want of a bold and profound describer, and an accurate, and yet imaginative, surveyor? He that would encounter this task, must combine in himself the spirit of the cosmopolite, with the free and unbiassed mind of the philosopher, totally divested of antiquated prejudices and trite ideas: he should possess a profound conception and a vivid imagination, otherwise he will fall below the standard of the object to which he aspires. The decrepitude of Europe is no model for the juvenility of America; every thing is totally different; external nature, both men and governments,—and, in traversing the vast extent of 1700 leagues, from Cape de la Vela, in the 11° 50' north latitude, to Cape Horn, its southern extremity, we behold neither brilliant courts, military pomp, nor over-bearing nobility; but we meet with new and frugal governments, the tendency of which is to promote civilisation and happiness amidst a population hitherto ignorant and oppressed. No ancient Gothic cathedrals are to be seen, no ruined castles, no royal parks and magnificent palaces; but nature appears in all her magnitude,—in forests in their primitive majesty, in gigantic mountains and rivers, in the beds of which gold is discovered, in immense plains and valleys, and in all that mighty extent of territory which, in the hands of the Spaniards, was uncultivated, unproductive and unpeopled, but which now acquires vigour from the warm embraces of liberty.

The external features of the New World have derived from nature more bold and striking outlines than are displayed in the ancient hemisphere; the chains of mountains are continued to a greater length than in any other quarter of the globe—the Andes, which begin at Cape Horn, the utmost

\* The empire of Brazil presents but a slight exception to this general remark.

extremity of the southern continent, spread themselves to the farthest limits of the north, and are equally conspicuous for their magnitude and altitude. Chimborazo would exceed the elevations of Mount Etna, if it were placed on the summit of Canigon, or that of St. Gothard, were it placed on the peak of Teneriffe. From these majestic mountains flow down rivers still more majestic, and compared with which, the rivers of the Old World are only paltry rivulets. The river of the Amazons, the Magdalena, the Orinoco, the river de la Plata, and even the Rio Bravo, in Mexico, fill such immense and spacious beds, that, long before they feel the influence of the tide, they resemble rather arms of the sea, than rivers of fresh water. The river Amazon traverses a space of territory of more than 1,050 leagues in extent, and, as well as the river de la Plata, is not less than sixty leagues broad at its mouth. The equatorial regions of America present at once the most towering elevations, the most extensive rivers, and the most boundless plains in the universe. The immense space of ground that is crossed by the Orinoco, and is called the *Llanos*, has an area of more than 2,000 square leagues; its soil, that is alternately scorched and inundated, at one time like the deserts of Libya, at another overspread with a verdant carpet, like the *steppes* of Upper Asia, forms a contrast with the *paramos*, which are placed on the ridges of the Andes at an elevation of 10,000 feet, and likewise with the tablelands of Mexico, the elevation of which is 7,000 feet, where are found smiling valleys, towns built nearly on a level with the peak of Teneriffe, and farms 6,000 feet above the most elevated villages of the Alps.

We shall not now enlarge on the original discovery of America, nor on the frightful miseries that Mexico, and all South America, have endured under the Spanish yoke; nor shall we describe, with Mr. Ward, the long and sanguinary struggle that the former colony has sustained against the mother-country. We have had occasion to allude to those events in a former Number of 'The Athenæum,' when we reviewed the work of Don P. Mendibil on the 'Historia de la Revolucion de los Estados Unidos Mejicanos,' and, although the able sketch of Mr. Ward is more complete, as it continues the narrative to the year 1824, five years later than M. Mendibil's account, yet we will pass over, without any reluctance, those scenes of bloodshed and violence, however glorious may have been the result, to fix our attention on the actual state and the probable future destinies of the rising Republic.

The Republic of Mexico, which comprises the whole of the vast territory formerly subject to the vice-royalty of New Spain, is bounded on the east and south-east by the Gulph of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea; on the west, by the Pacific; on the south, by Guatemala; and, on the north, by the United States. Its length, from north to south, is 1,876 English statute miles; its greatest breadth, 364 leagues; and its surface, according to Humboldt, 118,478 square leagues of twenty-five to the degree. 36,500 square leagues are within the tropics, or, what is usually denominated, the torrid zone; and 82,000 square leagues are without the tropics, or under the temperate zone. The whole extent of the republic is equal to one-fourth of Europe, or to France, Austria, Portugal, and Great Britain put together.

The external physical appearance of Mexico is highly remarkable and picturesque. The Cordillera of the Andes, after traversing the whole of South America, and the Isthmus of Panama, separates into two branches on entering the northern continent, which, diverging to the east and west, leave in the centre an immense platform, or table-land, where Mexico lies, being intersected by the higher points and ridges of the great mountainous chain by which it is supported, but raised, in the more central parts, to the height of seven thousand feet above the level

of the sea. This table-land is divided by the Natives into three divisions, called: *tierra caliente*, (the hot country,) a term which implies that portion of the country, which is full of hot and low ravines, sufficiently warm to produce the tropical fruit, and, with them, the diseases of the tropics; *tierra fria*, (the cold country,) which is applicable to the mountainous districts, that rise above the level of the capital, up to the limits of eternal snow; and *tierra templada*, (the temperate region,) which embraces all that is not included under one of the other two divisions.

'Nature has bestowed upon Mexico a soil teeming with fertility, and a climate, under which almost every production of the old and the new world finds the exact degree of heat necessary in order to bring it to perfection. But the peculiarity of structure in which this variety of climate originates, neutralises, in some measure, the advantages which the country might otherwise derive from it, by rendering the communication between the table-land and the coast extremely difficult, and confining, within very narrow limits, the intercourse of the states in the interior with each other. On the Table-Land there are no canals (with the exception of that from Chalco to Mexico, about seven leagues in extent) and no navigable rivers; nor does the nature of the roads allow of a general use of wheel-carriage, which, when applied to the more bulky agricultural produce of the country, increases enormously the price of articles of most general consumption before they can reach the principal markets. Thus, in the capital, which draws its supplies from a circle of perhaps sixty leagues, comprising the valley of Mexico and the fertile plains of Toluca, as well as the great corn-lands of the Batio and La Puebla, wheat, barley, straw, maize, and wood, are not only dear, but the supply is uncertain; while, in the districts immediately beyond this circle, but which, from their distance, are excluded from the market, the same articles are a mere drug, and may be purchased at a fraction of the price.'—Vol. i. p. 16, 17.

We may easily conclude, from the diversity of temperature which prevails in Mexico, that its vegetable productions must possess a great variety. The most important of these, (and of which Mr. Ward gives the characteristics,) are maize, wheat, and barley, bananas, rice, olives, the vine, sugar, coffee, tobacco, indigo, chocolate, and cotton, besides vanilla and cochineal, of which nature seems to have given to New Spain the almost exclusive possession.

'I do not conceive,' says Mr. Ward, 'that the exportations of Mexico in corn will ever be considerable; but, in those articles which we term colonial produce, for which there is a constant demand in Europe, and which a large portion of her territory is so admirably qualified to produce, she has a source of wealth as inexhaustible as her mines themselves. The whole eastern coast of Mexico, extending in length from the river Guasacualco to the northern frontier, and in breadth, from the ocean to that point upon the slope of the Cordilleras, at which tropical fruits cease to thrive, is susceptible of the very highest cultivation; nor can any part of the now exhausted islands sustain a competition with the fertility of its virgin soil. The state of Vera Cruz alone is capable of supplying all Europe with sugar. Humboldt estimates the produce of its richest mould at 2,800 kilogrammes per hectare, while that of Cuba does not exceed 1,400 kilogrammes; so that the balance is as two to one in favour of Vera Cruz. Coffee is produced in a ratio almost equally extraordinary. Indigo and tobacco succeed as well; while, a little to the north, the state of Texas, which enjoys nearly the same climate as Louisiana or South Carolina, is equally well adapted to the growth of cotton, the great staple of the United States.'—Vol. i. p. 20, 21.

The federal republic of Mexico is distributed into nineteen states. These states commence on the south-east, with the Peninsula of Epican or Merida, and, on the south-west, with Tabasco, Las Chiapas, and Oaxaca; which are followed in regular succession, towards the north, by Vera-Cruz, Tamalipas, San-Luis, Potosi, New-Leon, Cohahuila, and Texas, which comprise the whole territory as far as the frontiers of the United States on the gulph. La Puebla, Mexico, Valladolid, Guadalajara, Sonora, and Chinaloa, the western extremities of which border on the Pacific, and Quesetaro, Guanajuato, Zacatecar, Durango, Chihuahua, and New-Mexico, which

occupy the centre of the country, and extend, between the two oceans, towards the northern frontier.

According to Mr. Ward's estimate, the whole population of Mexico, which was, in 1806, six millions and a half, must be, in 1827, eight millions. Of this number one-third is Indian; another belongs to the mixed races; a sixth is nearly composed of Creoles; and the remainder is either free, or slaves, Negroes, or Europeans: the number of the latter amounted, in 1803, to 80,000. Before the revolution, this population was divided into seven distinct castes; and it was the policy of Spain to promote a constant rivalry between them, by creating little imaginary shades of superiority amongst these different classes, which prevented any two from having a common interest. The whiteness of the skin was the general criterion of nobility. The King reserved to himself the power of conferring the honours of whiteness upon any individual, of any class, which was done by a decree comprised in the words, 'Let him be considered as a white;' and the greatest pains were taken to impress the people with the importance of these distinctions.

The form of government adopted by the population of Mexico, was that of a federal republic. The principles of this system, a fair account of which Mr. Ward has given in the first section of Book iii. of his work, are too generally known to require comment; and it will be sufficient to say, that most of the articles of the federal act are transcripts of the corresponding articles in the Constitution of the United States, and that the Mexican constitutional act displays the most laudable anxiety for the general improvement of the country, by disseminating the blessings of education, opening roads, establishing copyrights, patents, and the liberty of the press; founding colleges, promoting naturalisation, and throwing open the ports to foreign trade; abolishing the torture, arbitrary imprisonment, confiscation of property, special commissions, retractive laws, and all the abuses of absolute power.

The Republic of Mexico is divided into eighteen *comandancias generales*, each under the orders of a military commandant. The army for the present year consists of 58,955 men, of whom 32,161 are actually under arms; the remainder are ready to be called out, should their services be required. In January, 1827, the navy consisted of one ship of the line, two frigates, one corvette, four frigates of war, one schooner, four gun-boats, four large launches, and two pilot-boats. The expenses of the war department, for the year ending June, 1828, were estimated at 9,069,633 dollars, and those of the navy at 1,309,045 dollars:—Total, 10,378,678, about four-fifths of the whole annual expenditure of the Republic. Mexico possesses, on the Atlantic side, no harbour of sufficient magnitude to become a fit station for any considerable maritime force; her ports on the Gulf are barely sufficient for the purposes of commerce; most of them are insecure, and some, mere roadsteads. But, on the western coast, the case is different: from Acapulco to Guaymas, there is a series of magnificent ports, many of which no vessel has ever yet entered; and Acapulco is, perhaps, the finest harbour in the whole world. Mexico possesses only five fortresses: St. John of Ulloa, Campeche, Perote, Acapulco, and San Blas. In most of them, the works are in a bad state; but, according to Mr. Ward, who strongly and justly contradicts, in this and many other points, the remarks of Mr. Beaufoy, there is little prospect of their being necessary.

Notwithstanding the nominal war with Spain, few countries are so well able as Mexico to dispense with the existence of a large permanent force. There is hardly a single point upon her long-extended line of coast, upon which it would be practicable to disembark an invading army; and, were it even landed, such are the difficulties with which it would have to contend, upon the ascent to the interior, from the want of roads and provisions, and the deadly nature of climate, that its destruction would be almost inevitable. A month's de-

tection in *tierra-caliente* would be equivalent to the loss of a pitched battle; and, even supposing every natural defence to be successively carried in the shortest possible time, a month would hardly, under any circumstances, suffice to reach the table-land. There the struggle would commence anew; and such is the horror entertained at present of foreign dominion, that I am convinced that a levy, *en masse*, of the whole population would be the consequence of any hostile aggression.—Vol. i. pp. 315, 316.

The Republic of Mexico is divided into one archbishopric and nine bishoprics. In 1826, the number of the secular clergy was estimated at 3,473, and, in 1827, at 3,677. The number of those who took orders during each of these years is not supposed by Mr. Ward to have amounted to one-fourth of those who were ordained in 1808. The regular clergy is divided into fourteen provinces, possessing 150 convents, which contained 1,918 friars. Within the last twenty years, the clergy has diminished one-half, and so of the revenues of the church. In 1805, they amounted to forty-four millions, and in 1826, they did not exceed twenty-millions of dollars. But this is not their only riches; the clergy derive an additional income from the tithes, and fees on baptisms, marriages, and burials, and likewise on many other superstitious but lucrative ceremonies. 'Not a hut or garden,' says Mr. Beaufoy, in his 'Mexican Illustrations,' 'not a pigsty or a footpath, can be used, until blessed and ornamented with a wooden cross. Each separate working in the mines, each heap of stones, and utensil for amalgamation, must be similarly honoured, with the addition of fresh nosegays, wild flowers, and green branches every morning, and all these bring grist to the mill.' We must acknowledge, that, in no country, is superstition more degrading and more deeply rooted than in New Spain. Religious toleration does not exist there; and the influence of the priesthood exerts a sway unknown in any other American Republic. The causes that Mr. Ward assigns for this propensity are perfectly correct and judicious; but they are not the less disgraceful, and they demand a speedy and effectual reform on the part of the legislative body.

The finances of Mexico, especially at the commencement of a new republic, and at the close of a civil war, cannot be in a very flourishing condition. The receipts in the year 1826, amounted to 13,667,637 dollars, and they have been estimated, for the year 1828, at 13,938,830. The expenditure, which rose in 1825 to 20,096,277 dollars, has been reduced, for the year 1827, to 14,363,098, including the interest of the two loans made in England for a sum of 6,400,000 pounds sterling, or about 30,000,000 of dollars.

'This is a result which ought to afford more satisfaction to those whose interests have been affected by the late want of remittances from Mexico, than the most specious attempt to demonstrate, upon paper, the existence of a surplus revenue, from which no practical benefit can be derived. It proves that the resources of the country are unimpaired; that, with very limited assistance from foreign capitalists, the revenue department has been re-organised, the complicated machinery of former times simplified, and a system established, which has already produced, in ten months, eleven millions and a half of dollars; and that, although the receipts do not yet quite cover the expenditure, there is every prospect that they will do so in 1828, since that expenditure can hardly exceed the estimate of the present year; while a lamentable change, indeed, must take place, in order to prevent the revenue from producing the fourteen millions of dollars, at which, upon the most careful and dispassionate computation, I have estimated it in the preceding pages.

In the next article, in which we shall conclude our account of Mr. Ward's valuable publication, we shall offer some details respecting the actual state of the commerce and the mines of Mexico.

#### NUPTIAL POETICS.

'My friend,' said C., 'you know I marriage hate—  
And, to speak truth, unto your wedding fête,  
Unwillingly at all I come.'  
'Believe me, as a guest, no one's more fit  
A-verse to marriage: you're most requisite  
For an Epithalamium.'



## WON HAMMER'S HISTORY OF THE TURKS.

The first volume of this work has been recently translated from the German, and received high and deserved commendation from all the Reviewers under whose notice it came at the period of its publication. The second volume of the same work is in a forward state of preparation, and will, from what we have seen of its contents, be not at all inferior in interest or value to its predecessor. From this unpublished work, we have been permitted to make a selection of some striking passages; which, as they will possess all the attractions of novelty and originality for the reader, and, at the same time, give an accurate idea of the general character of the forthcoming volume, we show its claims to public attention, we present without further preface or comment.]

## Siege of Constantinople, in 1453—Greek Infatuation.

THERE is a remarkable coincidence between the blindness and presumption which accompanied the fall of the last Byzantine Emperor and the headlong obstinacy with which, perhaps, the last of the Sultans appears, at the present moment, to rush into the jaws of destruction.

Mohammed the second, whose father, Murad, had, from his Adrianopolitan capital, over-run the whole Byzantine dominions, up to the very walls of the seat of the Greek empire, was scarcely one-and-twenty when he ascended the throne of the Sultans. His first act in politics was to close his campaign in Caramania, in order that his patient and warlike temper might devote itself, unfettered and exclusively, to the execution of his darling project on the European side of the Bosphorus.

It was at so ill-starred a moment as this, that Constantine the elder, as if unconscious of his own debilitated and dismembered power, had the generosity to despatch ambassadors for the purpose of reproaching Mohammed with his want of punctuality in providing the stipulated subsistence-money for Prince Urchan, and to threaten him with setting up their captive as his rival, if he did not immediately pay down double the amount. To this foolhardy menace Chalil, the Grand Vizier, who was friendly to the Greeks, not only because he was of a kind and lively disposition himself, but was by no means averse to the immense bribes thrust upon him, made the following reply:

'Ye unreasonable and besotted Romanists! I have long seen through your sly and perfidious attempts. I know that our deceased master, a man of integrity and peaceable disposition, looked anxiously upon you, but not so our present master, Mohammed. If Constantinople should escape his well-known, daring, and unteachable petulance, I will then confess that God is still merciful to your intrigues and backslidings. Fools ye are! the ink of the treaty you have signed is scarcely dry, when you make your way into Asia, expecting to terrify us with your usual bombastings. However, you will not find us a race of inexperienced, powerless sucklings; if you can do any thing, pray do it; if you think fit to proclaim Urchan sovereign of Thrace, let him be so proclaimed; if you choose to invite the Hungarians to cross the Danube, let them come; if you are inclined to re-conquer the territories you have lost to us, pray make the attempt; only would have you to remember, that you will fail in each and every one of these undertakings; and, moreover, that even what you fancy you possess will be torn from you. Nevertheless, I shall take care to acquaint my master with what you have represented, and whatever he wills, that shall be done.'\*

Mohammed, not having at that time brought his Asiatic campaign to a close, and being apprehensive of Urchan's release, until that was effected, assembled his indignation, and bade the ambas-

sadors meet him on his return to Adrianople. The answer he here gave, consisted in laying hold upon the revenues from the towns on the Strymon, which had been reserved for Urchan's subsistence, and expelling their inhabitants *en masse*.

## Castle of the Bosphorus built.

At the setting in of the winter of 1450, Mohammed issued circular orders throughout the whole of European and Asiatic Turkey, that the chiefs of provinces should supply him with a thousand masons, carpenters, &c., and the usual complement of bricklayers and labourers, as well as the materials requisite for erecting a castle on the European bank of the Bosphorus, on a spot situated at its mouth. Such tidings as these were well calculated to awaken in the breasts of the Greek Emperor and his whole metropolis a painful misgiving of their approaching end. Instead of any longer insisting upon Urchan's subsistence-money, or on the doubling of its amount, the imperial ambassadors now implored the Sultan to abandon his enterprise, and accept tribute from their sovereign. Mohammed, bursting out into a fit of rage, replied, 'that the Greeks were a race of traitors; that they had courted an alliance with the Hungarians, (his deadly enemies); that, before the battle of Warna, they had endeavoured to prevent his father from crossing over into Europe; that the latter, even at that time, had sworn to erect a castle on the European shore; and that, impediments having arisen to prevent his father from fulfilling his vow, he himself had resolved to accomplish it.' 'And who is to come between me and my right to build upon my own soil?' exclaimed the Sultan. 'Tell your Emperor, that the Sultan now upon the throne will bear no comparison with his predecessors; what they were incapable of achieving, becomes a work of ease in my hands; and what might never be their will, I choose to will in all the plenitude of my might! Let such an embassy be repeated, and the messenger shall be despatched forthwith.'

By the end of March the various materials were collected; timber was brought from Nicodemia and Heraclea in Pontus, and stone from Anatolia. The Beglerbegs of Europe and Asia, together with other Beys and Subaschi, assembled on the eastern side of the Bosphorus, and the Sultan himself left Adrianople to meet them. The site which he had fixed upon for the erection of his castle was opposite to that where Ildirim Bajazet had built the fort of 'Güfelhisar'; it was situated at the point where the Bosphorus is narrowest, and is hence called the 'throat,' in the same way that its extremity is termed the 'mouth,' where that channel is contracted to a breadth of five stadii between the two opposing promontories, and near to the spot where Androcles, of Samos, had thrown over the bridge on which Darius crossed with the Persian forces on his march to Scythia. Here stands the lofty eminence, in ancient times known by the name of *Hernaion*, in honour of Hermes, to whom a temple was raised on its summit. From this eminence, Darius watched the passage of his army from Asia into Europe; a fact which was recorded by inscriptions, in the Assyrian character, engraven upon columns erected there in memory of that event. At the foot of this eminence or promontory, Mohammed traced the outline of his castle, of which, with a species of superstitious prejudice, he resolved that the walls should describe the form of the word Mohammed, (his own as well as the Prophet's cognomen,) as written in the Arabic character, and that a tower should be raised wherever the M occurred, this letter having in the Arabic an annular form. Hence the circuit of the edifice, with its three towers, displayed a most incongruous appearance; two of them starting up at the foot of the promontory, and the third being turned towards the sea. The construction of the latter was entrusted to Chalil-Pasha, the Grand Vizier, whilst

that of the two former was left to the Vizier Sarganos and Saridsche-Pasha, who had grown grey in the service of the Court and Harem. The Sultan himself undertook to build the walls which should connect the towers into one structure. A thousand masons, each having two assistants under him, carried on the labour without, and an equal number within, the walls. Not only was Asia tributary of the materials needed, but the dismantled walls and churches of the Bosphorus, nay, even the pillars of the immense and splendid church of Michael the Archangel, on the Sosthenian Sea, were rendered subservient to the purpose in hand. By such means as these was the castle of the Bosphorus completed within a space of three months; its rampart being twenty-five, and the walls of its towers thirty, feet in thickness.

Being erected at the gullet of the canal, and so placed as to be capable of cutting all navigation short, Mohammed conferred upon it the name of *Boghafkesen*, or 'Gullet-chopper.' The Greeks, who were accustomed to the process of decapitation, confounding the first two syllables with the word *Basch*, or head, resolved the name into that of the 'cutter off of heads.' Its first governor was Firufaga, who was ordered, with the four hundred Janissaries under him, to stop every description of vessels, and compel them to pay tribute before they were released. As a means of effectually securing the object contemplated, that of commanding the Bosphorus, the tower which lay upon the sea was furnished with Chalil-Pasha's enormous cannon.

On the 28th of August, 1452, Mohammed quit- ted the spot, made a reconnaissance round the ditches of Byzantium, and on the 1st of September returned to Adrianople.

## First Hostilities between the Turks and Greeks.

During the preceding summer, the Greek Emperor had had recourse to the mistaken policy of endeavouring to attain by unmanly humiliation, what he had failed in obtaining by empty menace. With this view he sent ambassadors to implore safeguards for the villages situated on the Bosphorus, and protection for their corn fields during the approaching autumn. At the same time, he daily supplied the Sultan's table with the choicest viands and beverages. Instead of acceding to the request, or returning the Emperor's civilities, Mohammed issued orders that no one should venture to impede his troops in driving their horses, mules, or beasts of burthen into the corn-fields of the Greeks, and, if resistance were offered, that recourse should be had to force of arms. Now, Isfendiar's son, (who had married the Sultan's sister,) having driven his cattle into the gardens and fields about Epibaton (*Bivados*), a blow given by a Turkish groom to a Greek, who was abetted by his countrymen, brought on a skirmish, in which several lives were lost on both sides.\* A report of this affair being laid before Mohammed by the *Kiajbeg* (or Minister of the Interior), he was directed to retaliate, by cutting the inhabitants of Epibaton to pieces. The Turkish soldiery consequently fell upon the reapers of the town, as they were going forth to their morning labours; such was the dawn of the last war in which the empire of Byzantium was engaged. Constantine, hereupon, closed the gates of the city, and incarcerated the whole of the Turks who were found within its walls. Amongst these were several young eunuchs belonging to the Sultan's Harem; yielding to their earnest representations, that, if they were not instantly set at liberty, nay, even if released subsequently, their lives would become forfeit, the Emperor bade them go free on the third day, and took the opportunity of sending Greek envoys to Mohammed, by whom he made known to him, 'that the Emperor relied upon the help of God in all that concerned the fate of the city, of which he had closed the gates only

\* Ducas's Hist. Byzant., xxxiv, p. 132. We have given the speech as reported by the accurate Ducas, who has probably preserved it in the exact form of words in which it was delivered by Chalil, of whom, indeed, its expressions are singularly characteristic.

\* Ducas's Hist. Byz., xxxiv, p. 137.

after peace had been violated, and that he would protect its inhabitants to the utmost extent of his power, should it not please Heaven to inspire the Sultan with friendly dispositions.\* Mohammed was loath to trouble himself with the task of seeking either pretexts or apologies for his violence, but instantly declared war, and, from that time, (June, 1452,) until the Cross was replaced by the Crescent, all ingress into the proud metropolis of the East was barred.

#### THE WORKS OF THE O'HARA FAMILY.

AMONG the herd of novels, in the eyes of some the curse, in those of others the glory, at all events the peculiarity, of our day, there is much to distinguish these productions. If they be in any quality different from scores of others published every year, they must be the fruits of no common degree of talent; for a larger portion of second-rate ability was never applied to any department of literature in any country than has, in our time, and in England, been turned to novel-writing. A very uncommon share of talent is, indeed, in our opinion, discernible in these writings,—and we wish to say a few words on the singularity of the whole series. In the first place, they are, especially, national novels. Every thing about them is Irish; the humour, sometimes coarse, always real and vigorous—the startling alternations of crime and virtue, ferocity and tenderness—the characters often so natural, yet, at the same time, consistent only in inconsistency—merri- ments that dance on to such fearful catastrophes— horrors big with a jest, and plots that only the wildest imagination could have conceived, and only Ireland could have realised. There are no other novels with any thing approaching to the power which these have displayed, in the employment of such elements. Lady Morgan seldom seems full of her subject, and is more occupied in writing pleasantly about the scenes and personages she introduces than in representing them bright and moving to the reader. Besides, her pictures are far too often merely grotesques, in which we scarcely can trace any thing more than absurdity, instead of wearing an outside garb of oddity, with much of truth and substantial nature beneath it. Miss Edgeworth exhibits her countrymen not as a philosopher, but as a *philosophe*; or, as Coleridge would say, a *philosopher*; and this makes all the difference between drawing them as they are, and as neither they nor any human beings ever can have been. Her mind is so artificial, that is, so incapable of worthily pursuing Art, that she has failed in describing, not merely Irishmen, but men; and, with all her ingenuity and labour, and ostentatious tact, and real talent, her books are very unsatisfactory, though very entertaining. The author of 'To-day in Ireland' is obviously a clever man, and an excellent writer. If he fails at all, it is in that intense power which is so conspicuous in the works of the O'Hara Family; though he in some degree makes up for the deficiency by a greater purity of taste than belongs to his more voluminous and more popular rivals. The writer of 'The Munster Tales' has much of evidently immature ability, which will require long and careful training to make it all that it may be. Some of his sea-side sketches are particularly true and vivid. His characters are irregularly sustained, and his plots wretchedly put together; while some of his scenes are immoderately extravagant, and others intolerably feeble. Yet we look forward with much pleasure to the fulfilment of the promise which his works have given; and, judging from the few specimens of his published verse, poetry is like to yield him her honours as well as prose. These are really all the Irish novelists we remember, and we have not leisure at present to pay them any more attention. As

\* Phranze Chronicon, lib. iii. c. 3.

pictures, then, of Ireland, we hold the works of the O'Hara Family to be, on the whole, superior to any others we could name. They exhibit, in perfection, a mastery over the two extremes, which make up so much of the mind of the country—terror and laughter. The most effective scenes are always either those of the most high-wrought and tremendous excitement, or of the broadest humour; and in these no one, not even Scott, is superior to him. The intermediate steps from merriment to despair are less accurately given; and the scenes which depend for their interest on a tone of light and fantastic trifling, or on some thin colour of gentle feeling thrown over the ordinary circumstances of life, are comparatively ineffective, and sometimes tedious. A somewhat similar remark is applicable to the personages. Those in the upper classes of life, from whom, except in some few moments of passion, we expect a graceful carelessness and polished indifference, are often cumbersome and awkward in their attempt to be elegant.

On occasions which call forth the wildest passion, in agony, hatred, and death, the previous dulness of such beings is completely forgotten and lost in the strength and absorbing interest of the situation. In the lower ranks of characters, whose very difference from ourselves supplies us with entertainment and study, success is almost uniformly attained. There is among these a fullness of delineation, a richness, and breadth, and unflagging spirit, filling every word of the most casual dialogue, and bringing before us the peasant jesters or heroes, or, more commonly, both in one, with a truth and vivacity which no human pen can excel. We strongly suspect that this difference between the merit of the sketches from the opposite extremes of society arises, in a great degree, from the state of society in Ireland. There is no body of Irish gentry. The good among the upper class are merely Englishmen. There has not been time for an upper class of Roman Catholics to arise; and those of the Protestants who, in any material point, differ from Englishmen, are not such as would furnish a novelist with heroes and heroines. They are imperfect, half-formed beings, with a good deal of the tyrant, something of the knave, and much of the profligate. It is not from these elements that a romance-writer would form his gallants or his beauties. At the same time, to preserve the nationality of the works, it was necessary to represent very different persons from those of Fielding, Richardson, and the author of 'Tremaine'; who are the only amiable class of gentry the elements of which are to be found in Ireland, and that very sparingly. The specimens of the genuine Milesian gentleman are so few, and with much of really respectable, have at the same time so large a share of what, to modern and English eyes, is purely absurd, that they are not such as to supply a writer with the persons on whom he wishes to concentrate our interest.

Hence it is that the superior classes in Miss Edgeworth's novels, except in that one delightful exception of 'Lady Geraldine,' are purely English. Hence the fantastic inconsistencies of those who play the *grands rôles* in Lady Morgan's pleasant extravaganzas; and hence it is that the authors of the O'Hara Tales have been compelled to draw upon their fancy, not only for the form, but for the very material of many of their foremost characters. This is the greatest evil in their writings. Another springs from a very different cause. They are not only national, but also political, novels. The politician attaches interest to many things, which, to the novel reader, are merely tedious; and this has given rise to the admission of many prolixities which would otherwise doubtless have been omitted. There are redundancies in every volume of the series, and mere pruning would get rid of many of the most noticeable faults.

#### PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS.

##### Royal Academy.

WHATEVER question may be made as to whether the Exhibition at Somerset House be a good one or not, two things respecting it are beyond all doubt. First, that it is the dirtiest and most rudely conducted picture-gallery in the universe. This happens, we presume, because the office of dispensing tickets and catalogues, which should be assigned to persons of some degree of address, is executed by bearish and liveried menials, whose proper duty should be to sweep the floors and stairs. Our second undisputed point is that the Exhibition ought to be a good one; for who can read an account of the proceedings at the Artists' Benevolent Fund Society, which took place on Saturday, without acknowledging that all the requisites set forth in the Academy's excellent motto, and which we had occasion to notice in our last, abound. Con over the speeches of Lords Lyndhurst, Goderich, and Durham, and pronounce if there be wanting to our artists either *fautores* or *commendatores*; the want of *materia* and *occasio* nobody complains of. We are grateful to their Lordships for their encouragement; but injudicious praise is as pernicious to the artist as to the child. There cannot be a more praiseworthy use of the immense wealth of our Nobility and Gentry than the patronage of the arts, and the affording employment and means of subsistence to deserving and talented men, who follow a calling which, by contributing so mainly to the refinement of society, exercises so desirable an influence on the happiness of mankind. But their Lordships do ill to flatter our artists in any other way than by encouraging them. Our professors of the arts are truly worthy of patronage, but their performances as a school are not so good as they might, and as they ought to be. To express ourselves satisfied with their efforts, is as preposterous as to avow ourselves contented with the fashionable reading of the day, as a model of national literature. These works meet with commendation, and they deserve it; but, in applauding them, we measure them by a low standard. The same is the case with our works on art. What praise could be claimed by a single exhibitionist, when his work examined by comparison with an ancient master? The artist himself does not aspire to any such honour; and the critic who desires to be sparing, knows this, and never thinks of examining the modern works of his countrymen by such a test. But he does not, on that account, shun the less to see a grand work from a British pencil;—to behold a painting that might really and literally deserve to be placed by the side of a Raphael or a Titian.

Lord Durham deserves the gratitude of the country for the encouragement he affords to native art, by forming a collection of the works of modern painters; and even the observations of Lord Lyndhurst and Lord Goderich should not be objected to, were it not that they seem to proceed from that general taste for low art—for works of humour, in preference to those of imagination, which is but too prevalent in England at present, and which operates most prejudicially on the arts. Whether the taste of our patrons be influenced, in this respect, by the nature of the talent of our painters, and low art is patronised, because, in that humble walk, our professors are most successful; or whether, on the contrary, our artists do not soar aloft, because they are more sure of obtaining subsistence and patronage by hovering near the earth, and because, if they took a lofty flight, their patrons would be neither abler nor willing to follow them, remains to this day a question. The opinion of artists in general inclines, we are aware to the latter explanation; but for ourselves, we cannot and will not doubt that were a real Milton or Shakspeare to appear in our age, he would find readers and admirers; and that were a British Raphael to shine forth, his works would find encouragement and purchasers. We despair, however, of seeing the day; and, until we do, must make ourselves as happy as we can be with the treasures we possess.

We resume our notice of the Exhibition, which we left last week, at No. 193, Mr. Etty's *Composition from Milton*. This is a most favourable specimen of English art; the subject is well and poetically imagined and composed, and the picture is richly and cleverly coloured; the dark and light parts are harmoniously and very effectively blended. The story is well expressed, and the details are made to lend great aid to the general effect, the bacchanal dance is brilliant and joyous, and the gaiety is heightened by contrast with the sedate repose of other figures regarding the sport without partaking of it. The forms are in general good, although some of the attitudes are forced and inelegant. The



European figure, in the right hand corner of the picture, is remarkably fine. The dark head and figure of the bearded man seizing a nymph, produces a very effective contrast with the more delicate tints of the female: the head itself is excellent, and affords a truth and life not common in modern paintings. The group in the left-hand corner of the picture displays another happy effect of contrast, and is of sentiment. The sky and landscape are in the manner of Titian, and by no means an unsuccessful attempt. The objections to which this picture is open, are perhaps too great a positiveness of colour; an awkward and slovenly arrangement in the hair of some of the females, an inelegance of attitude, and a too general resemblance in the features—all the figures appearing to be of one family.

Besides those pictures we have mentioned in the first part, there are several very attractive pieces, which we have accidentally escaped our notice, but not our attention. First of these, we may mention the *Lady Anne* (No. 120, by Jackson, R. A., a very clever and expressive portrait. *Esther approaching Ahasuerus*, No. 121, by Jones, R. A., is a clever piece, in the manner of Rembrandt, but without the vigour and force of that master. Stothard's *May Morning*, No. 98, in illustration of 'Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar,' *May*—is in that artist's usual delightful classical style of grace and elegance. *Doubtful Weather*, No. 59, and *Taking out a Boat*, No. 86, both by W. Collins, R. A., are delightful English landscapes, void of all false effect, yet warm and full of expression and truth.

The notice of the remaining rooms we reserve for our next Number.

*The Vision of Joseph,—a Painting by Mr. Lane.*

We were favoured with a private view of this Picture on Saturday, and, in common with a vast concourse of visitors, were surprised at its imposing effect. The room in which it was placed, however, was so ineffectually lighted, that it has been deemed advisable again to close the exhibition, in order to make some better arrangements. We should be guilty of injustice, therefore, both to the artist and to ourselves, were we to enter on a criticism of the work at present. We were it, therefore, for a future occasion, merely remarking, that, from the idea we were enabled to form of 'The Vision of Joseph,' we doubt whether a whole range of English art possesses a work of similar character and merit.

*The Fall of Nineveh,—a Painting by Mr. Martin.*

The title of this picture, the name of the artist, and the remembrance of his 'Belshazzar's Feast,' will suggest the manner in which the new subject is treated. The picture represents the moment when the wrath of Heaven falls on the devoted capital of the Assyrian empire, when the elements, and the efforts of mortal armies, prevail against Sardanapalus. The lightning bolts—the bolt strikes the massive walls—the prodigy is already accomplished, secure in the impossibility of the fulfilment of which, the monarch had abandoned himself to luxury and repose, while the host of his army was at his gates—THE RIVER HAS BECOME THE ENEMY OF NINEVEH! it overflows the breach, and with it enter the galleys and armed multitude of besiegers. The vast city is in flames—the conflagration approaches the palace of the monarch on the one side—the countless host of the enemy, with their warriors and horses, rush towards it on the other. Sardanapalus, conscious of his inevitable doom, low then, collected his vast treasures,—his couches of gold and ivory, his robes of costly raiment and precious jewels. He stands there himself, attired in his most gorgeous apparel, in the midst of his terrified harem: the vast pile is under their feet, and he orders the robes, already approaching, to be applied to it.

The upper part of this picture is a wonderful work, it speaks the powerful imagination of the artist; the effect of the conflagration, and of the sublime exertion of the city—of its piles of massive architecture, grand and imposing beyond conception. The light and conflagration are awful: the terror they inspire is astonishingly heightened by the appearance of the moon and a portion of the bespangled firmament, in a corner where the clouds have partially broken off, and where the fire has not yet reached. The host of armies entering through the breach, and rushing on to the fight, is most skillfully executed; the general effect is grandly designed and effective, while the parts are defined with wonderful labour and minuteness. The foreground of the picture we cannot bring ourselves to praise—all is overwrought and extravagant; the figures are in bad taste, badly drawn, and of vile expression. The female leaning on the breast of Sar-

danapalus may be excepted; the attitude is beautiful, but misplaced, and would have better suited a dancing group. The colouring is most gorgeous, but not to be recommended for imitation.

PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

King's Theatre—Tuesday.

'Il Don Giovanni' was repeated, on Tuesday the 6th inst., in a style rather superior to the performance on Madame Caradori's benefit; and, as far as regards the vocal portion, equal to the generality of representations in former seasons. This masterpiece, which, like many of the productions of Shakspeare, blends the sublime and serious with the comic, was composed at Prague as early as 1787, a date which has already procured for the music of Mozart the equivocal distinction of admission to the *ancient* Concerts in this country. The magnificent and scientific overture is another instance among many, to prove that the happiest efforts of musical genius are not always the offspring of elaborate thought or of frequent revisions. The score of 'Don Giovanni' was finished, the last rehearsal gone through, and the opera advertised for the morrow, ere Mozart penned a note of the overture. The intreaties of his friends and the manager were disregarded, and constantly put off with the assurance that he would write it in sufficient time for the performance on the next night. Conviviality held Mozart in such chains that it was late in the night before he returned to sit down to compose this overture. Ideas will not always flow at the moment most wanted, and he quickly felt the necessity of lying down, at least, for an hour or two, and afterwards returned to the task. The attempt was repeated with the reinforcement of a bowl of punch; and, although interrupted occasionally, as his progress would naturally be, by fits of somnolency, a disposition to which may be traced in several passages, the score was completed before breakfast, the parts copied before evening, and the overture performed and encored the same night.

The opening *lento* of this *chef-d'œuvre* is generally taken, at the King's Theatre, somewhat slow; indeed, such was the duration of the pause in the second bar, that an amateur rose inquiringly to ascertain whether any unforeseen calamity had befallen the instrumentalists. In the first finale, the *lucus musice*, (it scarcely deserves a higher name,) of three orchestras performing the same piece of music in different measures, we have never yet heard perfectly executed; and the present performance formed no exception to our experience. In this original device all parties have the same *motivo*; but the orchestra divides itself into three distinct bands, of which two are generally on the stage; one of the divisions executes the subject in 3-4, the second in 3-8, and the third in 2-4 time. When well executed, we have no doubt the effect is novel if not pleasing; but it requires such skill and attention on the part of the artists, that it has been little else than a confused mass of tone whenever we have heard it. The execution of the instrumental portion generally, in the present revival, appeared to us inferior to the performances of former years. There seemed a want of strength in the numbers of the stringed instruments, especially of violins, a department the efficacy of which is of such paramount necessity for the complete execution of Mozart's music. We fancied also a want of precision; certainly not from any dearth of first-rate professors, although, for the quality of the second-rates, we cannot so surely vouch; if these latter are not of strictly comparative force and talent, the correct exertions of the former will ever be neutralised.

The acquiescence on the part of Mademoiselle Sontag to appear in the character of *Donna Anna*, however we might estimate the professional kindness which prompted it, was little calculated to raise her vocal fame in the British musical world; more especially as the final opinion of many connoisseurs has no doubt been deferred until her appearance in a second character. But actors and singers are generally the worst judges of their individual *forte*; and Mademoiselle Sontag, however she may deem the part calculated for her voice, ought not, with a due regard to the fame she has realised in this country, to have undertaken a character so decidedly opposed to the line of her histrionic talent, and far less should she have suffered her good-nature to volunteer the acceptance of the part of *Desdemona*, in which Madame Pasta seemed but a few days ago to have determined to set all competition at defiance. It affords us the greatest satisfaction, notwithstanding this, to acknowledge that the conception and portraiture of the melancholy feelings of *Donna Anna*, by Mademoiselle Sontag, far exceeded our anticipations.

In acting and singing, she evinced throughout a laudable and complete study of the part. Were we inclined to throw out a hint for improvement, we might, perhaps, recommend the lowering of a forced intonation of a considerable portion of the music. She is too apt to execute, it occasionally at the utmost pitch of her voice; whether we shall place this ultra-exertion to the charge of the school which has produced her, wherein we know, from experience, that sudden *fortissimo* are too much in vogue, or whether we shall ascribe it to an anxious desire to reach the extremity of this spacious house, we confess ourselves in doubt. Her action and execution of the recitative, solo and duet upon her father's murder, 'Ma qual mai s'offre oh dei,' was an excellent and touching performance; the highly pathetic piece in which she informs *Ottavio* of the circumstances preceding that catastrophe, was by no means so effective or so feelingly delivered. Mademoiselle Sontag concluded her part with the recitative, 'Crudele ah no mi bene,' and bravura, 'Non mi dir.' They were correctly and tastefully given; but, after the variations of Rode, the generality of bravuras will appear for some time mere milk-and-water.

In the choruses and throughout the finale of the first act, which exceeds, in our opinion, any composition of the kind, Mademoiselle Sontag exerted herself in a most praiseworthy manner, and in a style which might serve as an example to other *prime donne*, who are too apt to consider any marked effort in choruses, not only *infra dig*, but even injudicious, as tending to exhaust their capability of future exertion.

This lady's performance of *Donna Anna* deserves also the greatest commendation, for the fidelity with which she invariably adhered to the music of Mozart. We could not detect a single deviation from the authentic melody. True it is, that in Germany, however indulgent they may be towards interpolated passages in foreign masters, neither a note more nor less would be tolerated by an audience, who, nineteen out of twenty, have waded through the score as an integral portion of their education. If Mademoiselle Sontag will endeavour to subdue certain portions of her execution, (none more particularly than in the trio, 'Proteggila il giusto Cielo,' where, from the inefficient support of Signor Torri and Madame Castelli, the excess of *forte* on her part was doubly perceptible,) the performance of the character may be considered a satisfactory effort and calculated to increase her reputation in this country.

Those of our readers who have once heard the unrivalled execution of his bass passages by Zuchelli, need not be told that the music of 'Don Giovanni' could not have been in better hands. As regards acting, we can never forget Ambrogetti in the character, although, when we heard him, his voice gave evident tokens of speedy extinction. Zuchelli's action is a little redundant, especially in the finales where he exerts himself in the French *genre* most strenuously. His 'Deh vieni alla finestra,' and Spagnoletti's accompaniment, we have already noticed as equally delicious; they drew forth a general *encore*. 'Fin ch'an dal vino,' since the days of Ambrogetti, is taken so immoderately quick, as to render it impossible for any singer who does not possess a similar extraordinary volubility of speech, to execute it with any effect. The duet with Madame Caradori, 'La ci darem la mano,' was well and sweetly sung by both parties, and, of course, entailed another *encore*. It is, however, in the passages of the numerous trios and concerted pieces, that the flexibility of Zuchelli's voice is most especially valuable; in the *tutti*, it is somewhat deficient in strength.

Madame Caradori, as *Zerlina*, has little, in the way of intricacy or study, to contend with; but the part is neat and pleasing, and is generally rewarded with greater applause than the more difficult and laborious characters. 'Batti, batti,' was sung *un poco lento*, quick enough, we dare say, for Mr. Lindley, whose masterly performance of the accompaniment must be as fatiguing as his execution and tone stand unequalled by any violoncello it has been our fortune to hear. In one of the passages of 'Vedrai carino,' Madame Caradori arrived a crotchet too late for the orchestra, who received rather a severe rebuke, in the looks of the lady, for their want of complaisance.

Pellegrini's voice gives, occasionally, symptoms of departure; his acting is excellent, and, notwithstanding the many *Leporello*'s we have seen, on the English, French, German, and Italian stages, we recollect none more satisfactory and pleasing. 'Madamina, il catalogo questo,' was irresistibly comic.

Porto sings correctly, but he overacts the part of *Masetto*; his figure is certainly not precisely calculated for the part of *Don Pedro*, the Commendatore, and

much less for the spirit of the dead; otherwise, we see no reason for depriving him of the latter characters, and giving them to De Angeli. In 1824, Porto played both the spectre and the rustic, and truly sorry are we to find him already, in 1828, giving up the ghost. The strength and timbre of De Angeli's voice is unequal to the solemn denunciations of the statue; strains which are as awful as original, and which it requires but little effort of the imagination to fancy almost superhuman. The accompaniment of the wind instruments, however, would have speedily put to flight any illusion, which some of the auditors might have been disposed to indulge in. No half-dozen trumpets at a fair could have been more discordant, and the barbarous and random sounds which accompanied 'Di rider finirai pria dell Aurora,' were a disgrace to the theatre.

Of Signor Torri, in *Don Octavio*, and of Madame Castelli, in *Donna Elvira*, the less said, perhaps, the better. Their voices are not equal to the separate characters; and, in many of the concerted pieces, they might often have been absent from the stage, without the ear feeling sensible of the deficiency. Curioni ought to have taken the part of *Don Octavio*, but, as he is the only prominent member of the establishment who has not had an Opera night of repose since the commencement of the season, it is but fair to excuse his absence on the present occasion.

The choruses and finales were fairly executed, sufficiently well to permit a proper appreciation of these masterpieces. In scenery and decoration, there was, of course, nothing new; but the opera, on the whole, appeared to give satisfaction to a most crowded house, more numerous, however, than distinguished.

#### King's Theatre—Saturday.

'*La Donna del Lago*' had been advertised for Thursday, but a mutilated act from 'Semiramide,' and one from the 'Barbieri,' were substituted. On this postponement we shall simply remark, that, had the Managers consulted the reputation of the establishment, they would certainly have still further deferred the reproduction of '*La Donna del Lago*,' as we never recollect even a new opera, far less a revival, to have been so carelessly and imperfectly executed. This deficiency has probably in some measure arisen from the variety of interpolations imported, we presume, from the head-quarters of Rossini, by the numerous late arrivals from the *Théâtre Italien* in Paris. Still this circumstance forms no excuse for the gross want of rehearsals, palpable in almost every scene. The opening chorus was imperfect. In the first duet between Curioni and Mademoiselle Sontag, and in many other instances, the latter kindly acted as *souffleur* to the Royal Wanderer. The fair choristers in 'Dinibica Donzella,' started off with the melody in the symphony, and it was only by the threatening gestures of M. Spagnoletti's bow, that they were gradually reduced to silence, to await their turn for exhibition. All these, however, were trifling peccadilloes in comparison with the grand and sublime chaos of sounds in the latter portion of the finale of the first act, and in which neither key nor time could be detected; nay, the principal performers were unable to restrain their smiles at the incongruous mass. The instrumental performance deserves little better testimony; the opening movement, which, *par parenthese*, did not commence till half an hour after the usual time, was well executed. In the first duet between *Uberto* and *Elena*, our enemies the trumpets were again most woefully out of tune; and, as to the military music on the stage, we really pitied the master of the band; for, what with his musical exertions, the sawing motion of his clarinet in beating time, and the lateral movements of his head directed to the leader of the Orchestra, by way of telegraphing his helplessness of the disorder, the poor man had no enviable station throughout the evening. We have said enough to give our readers a faint idea of the style in which '*La Donna del Lago*' was produced this evening, and, with our best hopes for the lady's general convalescence, we shall turn to a more pleasing theme.

Mademoiselle Sontag appeared in the character of *Elena*, which we have no hesitation in pronouncing the best of the three *debuts* which she has as yet made in London. Her conception of the part seemed to us a little too heroic, and so much the less calculated for the lively and playful expression of the individual: a large circular plaid hat, vying in circumference with the monstrosities we see in the front of the house, and surmounted by no despicable plume of white ostrich feathers, tended by no means to render the character more domestic or more consonant with an Englishman's ideas of the 'Lady of the Lake.' Her study of the part formed a most laudable contrast to certain

other portions of the opera; indeed, she effectively assisted the choruses and action in more than one instance. The strong intonation to which we have adverted in our report of Tuesday's performance, occasionally burst out in the present character; a fact which rather surprises us, considering that we have nothing of the sort to complain of in 'The Barbieri.' 'Oh mattutini albori,' to hear which half a dozen times in one opera, however exquisitely sung, has become almost a penance, was perfectly executed; and, in the latter part, a few cadences were put forth, in which a vast deal of expression was introduced. In the first duet with *Uberto*, and accompanying chorus in the first act, Mademoiselle Sontag will, we are sure, be gratified by our styling her execution of the lines,

'Le mie barbare vicende  
Che te giova penetrar!'

a perfect 'gem à la Pasta.' We have before now watched the intensity with which Mademoiselle Sontag, in one of the boxes, has listened to the execution of the former lady, who, as to style and action, may be placed as a model to all rising vocalists. In the succeeding couplet,

'Ah! mi tolse un solo istante  
Del mio cor la libertà,'

our German artist took entirely her own ground, and gave as finished a specimen of her *savoir-faire* as her warmest friends could desire; it was received with such continued applause, as to render Curioni for some minutes inaudible.

In the duet in the second act, with *Malcolm*, and in the subsequent quartett with *Malcolm*, *Rodrigo*, and *Douglas*, both of which, we understand, belong to an earlier production of Rossini, Mademoiselle Sontag's portion was ever distinguished by a most correct ear, considerable taste, and extraordinary flexibility in the softer passages: the quartett was sung perfectly by all parties, and forms one of the most effective *morceaux* in the present performance of the opera. The varied and difficult bravura at the close of the finale of the second act, presented to this lady a magnificent field for the display of her knowledge of music, and of her execution of divisions, of which she fully availed herself; it formed a happy climax, and the curtain fell amidst applause, which we feel convinced was as sincere as it was unanimous. We are confident that this young lady's musical acquirements are even at this time not fully before the public.

Madame Schutz, as *Malcolm*, was another novelty of the evening, and rendered the character of far greater import, than we had been hitherto wont to attach to it. Her singing was very correct, occasionally a little flat as to tone, and often neutralised by circumstances, over which she had no control. That original cavatina, 'E a tante pene' was tastefully sung; and the following bravura and chorus, 'Che sento! oh me infelice,' had a magnificent effect, it being one of the few instances in which the 'Guerrieri' were at all perfect. The oftener we hear and see this lady, the more we feel sensible of the acquisition which the theatre has made in her engagement. Italian operas present so many *contralto* parts, the non-importance of which, we feel assured, will never be demurred at by Mlle. Sontag, that she is likely to become one of the most useful members of the establishment. Zuchelli has but a small character in *Rodrigo*, which he executes perfectly. Curioni, although the original *Uberto* in this country, was occasionally at a loss for his part. His 'Aurora ah sgerai' from within was deservedly encored, if such distinctions must be awarded.

Porto's *Douglas* is unquestionably one of his best characters, and 'Taci, lo voglio!' the most effective bass song we have ever heard him execute. His low notes, down to F, reach the farthest tier, and are always as correct as they are sonorous.

Once more, nothing new in scenery or decorations, not even our full share of canvas. 'Another part of the Lake,' in the first act, is one and the same with the former; and the entrance to the Hall of the Throne is most effective, provided contrast be a desideratum.

We must briefly notice in the *divertissement* the first appearance of Madame Dupuis, from the 'Académie Royale.' She danced a *pas de deux* with Daumont, and displayed much elegance and talent, occasionally tinged with a little affectation. Her figure is *petite*, with a pleasing face, and she reminds us strongly of little Leon, who danced on these boards some twelve years since.

#### English Opera House.

A YOUNG débutante, Mademoiselle Jenny Vertpré made her appearance at this Theatre, on Wednesday last, before a numerous and fashionable audience;

and her superiority in her own line of acting has acquired for her the title of 'La Mademoiselle Maria Vaudeville.' Her person, though under the middle size, is elegantly formed; her face, though not middle age, is animated and expressive; and her eyes sparkle with vivacity and sprightliness. Her deportment is easy and graceful, her voice so clear and articulate as to make her language perfectly intelligible to those who are but moderately versed in the French tongue; and she possesses a perfect knowledge of the business of the stage, a quality which few alone possess in an equal degree.

The pieces selected for her first appearance at the theatre were, 'Les Premières Amours,' et 'Le beau Jour de la Vie.' In the former she appeared to great advantage, and was well seconded by Laport and Pelissié; but in the second, in which she personated a young bride, she was still more successful, and drew down the unanimous applause of the audience.

On Friday, Mademoiselle Vertpré, made her second appearance in 'La Chatte métamorphosée en Femme.' Nothing can be more extravagantly burlesque and absurd than this little piece. A young German, whom we read of Werter and Faust has disordered in his intellects, becomes captivated with his cat; and, he provided by an Indian who pretends to possess a talisman that will render him master of the object of his affections, he thereby transforms his favourite cat into a beautiful young damsel. This proves to be his own cousin, who makes use of the instrumentality of the pretended magician, in order to cure him of his foolish attachment. 'The stratagem succeeds; and the young German, finding his passion still more invigorated by this metamorphosis, concludes the piece by marrying his cousin, who discloses to him the secret of his manoeuvre, and thus ultimately extricates him from his dilemma.

The character of this piece is sufficiently wild and extravagant; it has, besides, only two or three sources worthy of recollection, so that its attraction consists entirely in the skill of the performers. The scene opens with the representation of the residence of the young German: Puss is removed from the lap of his house-keeper and placed respectfully on a couch. The young lover enters, and, while in soliloquy, he expresses his passion in the most tender and pathetic terms. An Indian sorcerer then arrives and presents him with a talisman, which is to render him master of the object of his affection. He immediately puts it to use:—'magic words begin to operate—the curtain of the comedy is drawn aside;—but is it Puss o. a lady? It is both a beautiful young creature is beheld—she moves and sings, she even speaks; while the whiteness of her covering and its fine ermine borders bring Puss to our recollection—her motions, gestures, postures, and attitudes, all tend to keep up the deception: there is the same gaiety, vivacity, and gentleness, that distinguish the furry tribe. Puss herself could not be more active, agile, neat, and luxuriant; nor could she be more attentive to her own ease, or repose with more complacency on beds of down. The natural dispositions and the peculiar manners still remain; there is the same selfishness, the same propensity to mischief, and the appetite for petty plunder. She is equally artful in stealing cream, in playing with balls of three in laying siege to the canary-bird, in catching mice, the dexterous protension of her paws, in caterwauling on the tiles; in short, it was Puss herself completely but under another shape.

Mademoiselle Jenny Vertpré performed the part of the most admirable manner; indeed, it is owing her exquisite style of acting that such a piece was tolerated at all—nay, more, was crowned with success. The address and sprightliness, the shrewd and art refinement, which, this evening, she again threw into the part, were fully appreciated by the audience, who greeted her with long-continued plaudits. This piece has now become in London, as it had previously been at Paris, a species of triumph to Mademoiselle Vertpré. She certainly appeared in it to greater advantage than in 'La Chèreuse d'Esprit,' which terminated the entertainments of the evening, and which, we feel ourselves compelled to say, that Laport contrary to his usual practice, discovered neither ability nor art. This may, possibly, have been the reason that Mademoiselle Jenny Vertpré seemed to us rather behind her Parisian performance of the same piece, which we ourselves had an opportunity of witnessing, for, as Piron has observed, 'an actor rises or falls, a certain degree, with his fellow in the scene.'



## Argyll Rooms.

A 'Morning Concert' was held at these Rooms, for the benefit of Signor De Begnis, on Monday last, at eight o'clock, and attended by a very elegant and fashionable audience. The performances were principally vocal, and, in general, pleasing and effective. Madame Pasta, Caradori, Puzzi, Stockhausen, Schultze, Brambilla, each sang with their accustomed characteristic power and sweetness. De Beriot performed, magnificently, a solo of his own composition, on the violin, and Signor Puzzi was successful in a Fantasia on the horn. The aria from Puccini, sung by Madame Pasta, was the highest treat that could be enjoyed of musical power and expression. The duett, 'Lasciami non t'ascolto' of Rossini, was sung by Madame Caradori and Mademoiselle Brambilla, with infinite grace and sweetness; and Madame Ronzi de Begnis sang an aria of Mozart's in the most captivating manner: all these were very loudly applauded. The most delightful piece of the Concert was, however, the duett, 'Non temer mio bel cadetto,' from 'Mercadante,' which was sung by Signor De Begnis and his wife, with a degree of vivacious and expressive suitability of character, which displayed the highest dramatic as well as musical talent. Madame Ronzi's reception by the audience (after her long and regretted absence) was not enthusiastic; and the graceful and engaging manner in which she returned these congratulations, and the interchange of feeling, between herself and her auditors, almost affectionate. This was subsequently alluded to in an improvisation by Signor Carucci, who, on demanding a subject from some one of the audience, had proposed to him, 'The power of dramatic Music,' in illustration of which he indirectly alluded to the principal singers of the day, describing their chief characteristics, distinguishing Madame Ronzi de Begnis, however, by name, while her husband accompanied this poetic effusion on the piano, and gave evidence of his grateful and delighted feelings. They are both decidedly and deservedly favourites of the public; and we were, therefore, highly gratified to find, in addition to a very excellent concert, this unequivocal testimony of cordial and general approbation.

## EDUCATION AND TRAVELS OF AN UNFORTUNATELY 'CLEVER' MAN.

## To the Editor of the Athenæum.

SIR,—I return you my best thanks for your ready attention to my sufferings, and shall now proceed to redeem my pledge of giving you a full account of my education. Falstaff alleges his being born 'with a white head, and something like a round belly,' to justify his baldness and grey hairs; and I think I may, in like manner, date from the hour of my birth the fatality by which I am pursued. Sir, I came into the world, called by a caul; and my mother, in the blind confidence of parental love, imagined that a head, which nature had so liberally fortified from without, must contain something more than usually precious within. From such slender evidence, did my fond mother assume I was born to be a judge or a bishop; and, ridiculous as it may appear, I was, from the first hour, predestined, in her imagination, to the best honours that Lawn or Ermine can bestow. Her sentiments and forebodings were openly smiled at, but secretly applauded, by my father, who had been called, when young, from the drowsy dignity of college life, to active employment in a great commercial establishment, which he has quitted some years, having amassed a considerable fortune. Though by habit he became a good man of business, he never ceased to regard commerce as *infra dig.* for a person who had finished classical education; and I am sure he looked at the prospect of my taking the rugged road of fame and honours, in preference to the flowery path of wealth and ease. His own school-boy dreams of noble glory, he hoped to see realised in the elevation of his son; and his wish to support, with the wealth it secured, any dignity I might attain, gave a greater impetus to his pursuits after wealth, forgetting that the excess of his own exertions would probably diminish the labour of mine.

Passing over the enumeration of all the nurses who were sent away on account of my intractability, and all the fingerbread alphabets which I (even then, *savant d'aux dents*) so eagerly devoured; I must inform you, Sir, that, when eight years old, I was sent to a private school in the neighbourhood of London, and, having made some progress under my father in Greek and Æsop, I was more advanced for my age than most of my thick-headed companions.

Before I was eleven, I had reached through the twelfth book of the Iliad, which I believe the Doctor chose in preference to any other from its being a few lines shorter; and, after divers attempts upon Horace, Xenophon, and Livy, I found myself at thirteen holding a very respectable station in the most celebrated for learning of all our public schools. Here I passed four years; and, though the master always mentioned my gentlemanly conduct in his half-yearly reports, and frequently dined at my father's during the vacations, still he was quite silent as to my precocity of talent and vigorous imagination. The fact is, I possessed neither; and, if I had any claims to distinction, they were owing to a superiority of manner, which I certainly possessed over most of my school-fellows, probably from the very good society I always found myself in at home. At the age of seventeen, I left —; and had I, according to the received opinions of the class to which I belong, been sent to finish my education at one of the Universities, I might now have been eating my dinners at the Temple in undisturbed repose: the men might have thought me capable of Greek lambics and Billiards; the women, guilty of logic and green tea: thus, an object of indifference, if not aversion, to both, I should have been allowed peacefully to pursue the bent of my own inclinations, and might have slumbered through youth in correct mediocrity, without being suspected for a single moment of one liberal feeling or one gentlemanly accomplishment.

But far otherwise was it ordained. My father, who wished me to begin life at twenty, and who remembered his own idleness at College, determined on sending me abroad; and long and anxious were the debates, as to the town I was to select for head-quarters, during my absence from home. Since the days of Homer, no individual has had so many cities competing for the honour of being connected with him. Gottingen, Dresden, Paris, Milan, Heidelberg, Lausanne, and Geneva, were all named, canvassed, and rejected; and it was at last settled, that I should pass one year at Dijon, for the purpose of perfecting myself in the French and other languages, not forgetting the pleasing and useful accomplishments of music, dancing, and fencing. The other two years were to be spent on my travels, in the direction of which I was left entirely to myself, with this solitary piece of advice, that 'I had better keep a journal, and see all I could.'

Twelve months glided away most pleasantly at Dijon. I became a welcome visitor at the chateaux of many of the *ancienne noblesse* who now reside in the environs of that city; being too poor to enter into the expensive gaieties of the capital, and too proud to resort there to be eclipsed by the *parvenus* of the Revolution. Being *en pension* in one of the most respectable families, and liking much the society which I frequented, I made rapid progress in the French language; and, before I had been absent three months, I sent home, well written in my newly-adopted tongue, several letters, which my friends (confound them!) showed to all who had ever heard the name of any member of my family. Sir, I really believe my departure was much regretted at Dijon; for I always felt it a duty to endeavour to please, in return for the kindness and hospitality I experienced. For instance, when I entered a room, I not only bowed to the lady of the house, but I seldom failed to make some civil remark to every one whom I had seen before. I never stared at myself in the glass, creasing my neckcloth, or arranging my hair, for want of knowing what else to do. I never stood in the corner of a drawing-room, whispering ill-natured remarks to any grinning unlicked buck of a countryman:—no, Sir; I took another course; and, so successful were my endeavours to assimilate my habits to the customs of those I lived with, that, before I quitted Dijon, I could take *eau sucrée* and potato-salad, without feeling sick, or making a wry face; I could wade through the deepest dinner with the same knife and fork; and, on the birth-day of my amiable hostess, I consummated my triumph, in the amalgamation of *gruyère* with grapes.

A man of your liberal feelings, Mr. Editor, will applaud these victories over national prejudice; and, I can assure you, I went through much personally irksome to myself, from a sense of duty to the character of my countrymen: convinced that, however humble, each individual is regarded by foreigners as a sample of his race, and may, by his conduct, bias the opinions of hundreds in their estimate of the worth of the country to which he belongs. But to return. Though I am sure I was a general favourite at Dijon with all who knew me, yet my abilities were *there* never over-rated; and, perhaps, you can form the best idea of the estimation in which I was held there, from the following observation made

on me by a lady: '*Il danse comme un François, il est trop aimable pour un Anglois, il n'a pas d'esprit, proprement dit; mais, à trente ans, il sera savant, s'il travaille.*' These are safe remarks, but they were sincere and just.

I will not detain you, Sir, by any description of my travels through Germany, Italy, &c. &c.; the press has been teeming with such productions ever since the Peace; and I trust she is at last (as they have long been) past bearing; for what chance is there of novelty, till the high-roads on the Continent are changed? I confess I enjoyed my tour very much: and, with the assistance of Eustace, Forsyth, and Reichard, I wrote home some very decent letters. They were full and accurate, particularly in the dimensions of columns, mountains, and roads, though, I must own, I occasionally saw with the eyes of a traveller; and some of my accounts of Hungary would astonish the natives of any land—my postscript on the horned cattle has never been thoroughly digested to this day. At Brussels, on my way home, I met an old friend of the family; a dull, heavy man, but brave, and a K. C. B., one of the 'thousand-and-one knights,' who are to be seen in every corner of Europe, and who have fairly divided all the capital letters of the alphabet among them. This gentleman took a liking to me, and has done me a great deal of harm ever since; for he proved by far the most noisy of all my heralds, and got me, before I was aware of it, into a Club, to which, at that time, authors alone were said to be eligible.

My parents were both delighted with their only son; and, certainly, even the moderate additions I had made to my stock of knowledge, in the acquisition of a little of the history and languages of modern times, were sufficient to impose upon a lady and gentleman so very deficient in bibliographical attainment. My good mother's entire library consists of a Court Guide, Companion to the Altar, Debrett's Peerage, and three Bibles; and my father, who boasts of never having had occasion to read a book since he left College, has no acquaintance with any literature on this side of the Augustan age. With him, all are Goths, from the death of Seneca to the birth of Voltaire, whom he calls the first of the Vandals, the reigning dynasty. In such society, all my remarks had an appearance of novelty; and experience has since taught me that my parents do not differ from others in this respect so much as I at first imagined.

For two months after my return, I went through a regular routine of balls, routs, and dinners, the eternal sameness of which, in all matters, was insufferable. The same noisy music, the same stiff figures, the same opinions, rarely any fish but turbot,—and no signs of a sheep but the saddle,—and this in a maritime and commercial nation!! I allow, I found a great variety in wines; and I have tasted all sorts excellent in London, from imperial Tokay down to base Barsac. I was tired of all this long before the end of the season, and was rejoiced when my father desired me to choose between diplomacy and the law. I confess, I should have preferred the Guards to either; the officers of these fine corps possessing, in my estimation, less pretension, and more real information, than any set of men I could name. My friend too, the K. C. B., promised his assistance; but my father would not listen to it; so I accepted a place in the Foreign Office, which I relinquished in the short space of four months, absolutely overpowered by bad French and conceit.

Out of humour with every thing, I then entered myself at the Temple, where I remained immured for nearly two years; and there I should have been reading at this hour, (though I cannot regret the change, Sir, when communicating with you,) had not some horrible paragraph found its way into the newspapers, mentioning my finished education—my extraordinary talents—my seclusion from the world—and the consequent benefit that would be derived from my application. This 'untoward event' happened the week before the battle of Navarino. Annoyed beyond any power of description, I solemnly declared to my father, that I would renounce for ever all learned professions, and would take to some business, in which, from its nature and repute, talent is rarely met with, and never expected. My father immediately proposed banking, and I should have accepted the offer without hesitation, had I not been intercepted by the proposal of a gentleman to sell me his share in one of the great breweries, which would, he said, give me more leisure and equal consequence. But I found all the brewers who were not engaged in politics, so confoundedly literary or scientific, that I was obliged to give it up; and, much as I disliked the affected dress and manner of the juvenile bankers of the present day, yet such was the state

of my mind, that I preferred the military millinery of these Lombards of the west to the probable consequences of an enrolment among the wise men of the east.

You have now, Sir, as I promised you, the history of my education, and a full account of the whimsicality of my lot. From my former letter you will perceive that I am still unrelieved from the pressure of my reputation; for the weight of which I can hardly yet, with satisfaction, account; but which, as I told you before, I am labouring in every way to diminish. Nothing to my mind is so odious as praise undeserved; and I fear I am more singular in my abhorrence of it, than in being the object of its application. I could tell you a laughable anecdote about myself, relating to an embassy at one of the European Courts, and which occurred since I troubled you with my last; but I feel I have occupied so much of your time already, that it would be unjust to encroach upon it more. The recapitulation of my past life, and of my present annoyances, has afforded some solace to myself, and, perhaps, some amusement to others. At any rate, if my friends suspect me of writing these letters, they will surely have humanity enough to forego their persecutions, and allow me to enjoy that tranquillity of mind which I covet, and which all the wit they force upon me never could bestow.

Thus hoping, Sir, permit me to take my leave of you, with warm thanks for your attention to my miseries, and with sincere wishes for the continued success of 'The Athenæum,' to whose account (I speak *en banquier*) I would readily transfer all those praises, which to me are intolerable, but which are easily supportable when deservedly obtained.

May 3, 1828.

E. HUGH FITZ-SAPHO.

#### NOTE OF THE EDITOR.

We are extremely sorry to return evil for good, but our conscience will not permit us to do otherwise. If our ingenious and agreeable Correspondent had contented himself with merely asserting his misfortunes, and attributing them to the cause assigned, we might have pitied his sufferings, and written a lecture on the cruelty of tormenting our fellow-creatures by undue eulogium. But the manner in which he has narrated his 'tale of woe,' has, of itself, converted us to the opinion of his tormentors, and makes us so desirous of hearing further from him, that, even at the hazard of making him 'suffer all his troubles over again,' we must invite him to prove the sincerity of his wishes for the success of 'The Athenæum,' by doing that which is sure to occasion its being read with pleasure, namely, making it the medium of his future correspondence. We should be very unwilling to add by this step to the embarrassments which he has so feelingly portrayed; but he may delight the town, and yet keep his own secret, so that the impertinence of his friends may be kept at bay, and he may himself, in many a dinner and quadrille party yet to come, enjoy the pleasure of wondering, with the rest of the world, who that agreeable creature Mr. HUGH FITZ-SAPHO can be that tells the 'tale of his misfortunes' in a strain of such entertaining melancholy, in the pages of 'The Athenæum.'

#### LETTER TO THE BISHOP OF CHESTER.

##### No. III.

My Lord,—The Cambridge system separates at a touch into two parts—the arrangement for instruction, and the machinery which, though not of the same kind, yet operates on the characters of the students. Of the plan of teaching, I have said something. I shall now say something more to the same effect. I presume your Lordship will not dispute the proposition, that knowledge, if good at all, is either good for itself, or as useful to some other and farther end. If it be not good at all, it is inconsistent with religion to communicate it; and the state of mind which religion, that is God, prefers, is one destitute of knowledge. If this could be the belief of any man, then, in the opinion of such a person, the Universities exist only for an evil purpose. But, if it be said that knowledge is good in itself, religion, which is essentially truth, requires that it should be so represented. It is, besides, of far more consequence towards producing the general acquisition of knowledge, that a general eagerness for it should be excited by the exhibition of its excellencies, than that it should be taught on any particular system, or recommended by external advantages, which must be of momentary and partial influence. Now, is knowledge presented at Cambridge as a thing to be loved for its own sake? Can your Lordship persuade yourself for a moment that such is the case? Is it not, I will not say notoriously known, but is it not strongly felt, by every one at our University, that the purpose of learning and science is the attainment of subsistence and of distinction? Is not all the stream of energy which flows through the Colleges, except so much (it is indeed the main current) as runs to waste on the most frivolous or criminal objects, directed to these ignoble ends? And is it not the impression of all those

dignitaries to whose guidance the pupils are committed, that to pay attention to any thing but the 'regular course,' is a neglect of duty and of prudence, even though the mind were diverted to the lectures of authorised professors, such as those who fill the chairs of history and geology? Can any thing, in short, be conceived more utterly worldly and unchristian, than the whole class of motives which influence the competitors for University success? Knowledge is set before us, not as a bride to be wooed and worshipped for her beauty, her talents, and her virtue, but as a withered beldam, whose service can only be made endurable by the wealth and rank to which she can elevate her lovers. I do not suspect your Lordship of having read 'Don Juan,' except as Voltaire studied the Bible, to learn the devices of the enemy; but, if I may allude without offence to the story of that impossible invention, Lord Byron's Hero, I would say, that just as different as are our feelings in reading the tale of his passion for Haidee, and that of his intrigue with Catherine, just so opposite are the sentiments of a healthy mind, in weighing the love of knowledge against the greediness for college emoluments and Cambridge honours.

But, again, if knowledge be desirable for some ulterior purpose, I maintain, that, as your Lordship is determined to take a religious view of the question, you must grant the purpose to be the formation of religious character. Religion includes in itself morality, and, if the Cambridge system tends to produce immorality, it tends to produce irreligion. What, then, can be said in answer to the accusation, that one of the mainsprings of the consecrated mechanism is the wish to excel others,—in short, the feeling which, if analysed, reduces itself to envy and jealousy, and all the most evil forms of malignant selfishness. Extract as many common-places as we please from ancient rhetoricians, this is the plain fact; nor could all the acquirements on earth compensate for this degradation, or rebuild a nature thus ruined. But these acquirements never can, to any valuable degree, exist, where they are only sought after from such motives. Knowledge must not be introduced into the mind to lie there a dead lump of barren ore, nor be fastened on its surface in attenuated leaves; but we ought so to nourish and strengthen the soul, that it shall put forth a crop of golden fruits, springing forth from its own healthy strength, and maturing themselves in the light of Heaven. How can the mind be assisted to do this, but by cherishing all its better impulses, by educating all those principles which manifest themselves in love for God and for his creation, by applying ourselves to those feelings which render men generous, self-denying, humble; instead of working by the bad passions, which may make a juggler, a fence, a jockey, or a sophist, but can never produce Christians or philosophers? What is the meaning of this word 'philosopher,' but one who is a lover of wisdom? And shall it be said that he is in truth a lover of wisdom, who loves more than wisdom the paltry pre-eminence in the eyes of men, which the credit of being wise produces? Shall it be said that he is worthy to touch the hem of her garment, that he can stand in her presence, even afar off, who would listen to her teaching, not from love to her, but from hatred to his brother? This system proclaims that the human mind lives not by the word of God, but by bread alone, the bitter bread which is leavened with vanity, and poisoned by contention. This system is the offspring and servant of the Church of England. Is it likely to profit the Church of God? This system is the admiration of a bishop of our establishment; think you, my Lord, it is surveyed with an eye of favour by the Bishop and Shepherd of our souls? When he shall come to purge the threshing-floor, will there be no employment for his fan in the colleges of Cambridge?

It is easy to disguise envy under a smooth name, and call it emulation, and so raise an outcry in defence of it; yet, even thus, I doubt whether it will be ventured to say much in vindication of this matter. Mere assertion, probably, will be urged in support of the plan which makes the hope of subsistence part (and a main part) of a course of religious education. No one shall lay a finger on the shekels! Is it not the duty of all men to provide themselves with the means of support? And what more harmless than that derived from the high-minded and large benevolence of former ages? Yes, these things are almost as easy to say as to believe. But will your Lordship pretend that a course of theological lectures would be sufficient to spiritualise a mind corrupted, during several years, by the habit of looking at every thing with regard to profit and loss, and of weighing science and thought in the scales of the usurer; of considering every hour, and the whole energy of the

mind, as devoted, not to the service of God and the advantage of men, but solely to the gaining a prospective income? What is this, my Lord, but to make the noblest powers panders to the most trivial and vain objects; and to turn reason and imagination, history and poetry, the universe which is studied, the comprehension which embraces it, into the implements of a workman's bread-craft? Alas! it is not enough that the rules of a debased society, in which religion itself is subordinated to worldliness, and becomes the servant, not the overthrewer, of the money-table,—is it not enough that the laws of optics subject all the maturer years of existence to vain ambition, and the cares of life; but must these charitable Institutions also enslave the free-hearted and aspiring times of youth to the same wretched policy? Should we might at least take care that our establishments of education, whether including or not those theological instructions which are but as the dust in the balance should at all events be watchful and conscientious in the fostering of a faith in higher things than corn sheaves and fattened calves, and might lead them to that Truth has in itself a glory, a better illumination to its worshipper, than the riches of oil-jars can supply.

You doubtless perceive, my Lord, that it is my object to show how infinitely more important these considerations are, in estimating the influence of Universities on the religious character, than those which relate to theological lectures. I am of opinion that the passage which I quoted at the beginning of these letters exhibits a disposition to elevate into vastly undue importance the mere naked fact of nominal religious instruction; and that this would not have been the case, except for the sake of letting the world suppose that the system at Cambridge had a tendency to make the students Christians, which tendency would not exist at the London University. The last point I do not touch upon. I can neither assert nor deny that the new Institution will exert one kind of influence or another. In so far as it will have no endowment, I think it will have a great superiority. But with that I have now nothing to do; and I have sufficient pressure of employment in making some observations on the directly religious part of the scheme to which we have both been subjected—I mean the obligation to attend prayers at the College chapel; which brings me to the second part of the subject, namely, that University mechanism which is not designed for the communication of knowledge.

Some of my readers may possibly be ignorant, that every student at Cambridge and Oxford is obliged to be present about eight times in the week at the reading of the Liturgy. Nor is any part of the discipline strictly enforced as this. For what purpose? Some of the authorities assert that it is by way of a general muster-roll, the forces, which secures the presence of the youths in the college; others, wild and visionary theorists, profess that it is really for the sake of the devotional exercise, to which it subjects the minds of the pupils. I do not waste time in showing, that, as a mere roll-call, chapel-going is not necessary; for no one, even though protected by privilege of Parliament, will venture to say that the names might not as well be taken down in the hall as in the chapel. What then is the religious effect of this system on the minds exposed to its guidance? What must the effect be? What but a habit of indifference and contempt for the forms of prayer and thanksgiving, what but scorn for surplices, robes, altars, and hatred to all those names and ceremonies which were arranged and instituted of old by the piety of our founders of the Church of England? If any one is compelled to attend a religious service to which he has been led by no exaltation of feeling, which does not obtain a meaning and a holiness in his eyes from the devotion which he himself connects with it, what must the result be? what but that his mind will be wandering away to every thing the most trivial that can offer, or the most criminal that the contrast can suggest? What, in the case of young men so circumstanced as those at Cambridge, but that one will be scribbling equations in the Prayer-book, and another scratching caricatures on the wainscot, a third reading Harriet Wilson, and a fourth making bets with his neighbour for the next Newmarket Meeting? And in all this time what are the words which are passing through their ears, what the sounds which are being coming desecrated by habit? what but those which express the being and the attributes of God, the reliance of men upon his goodness, the character of the sufferings of Christ, the names which should be uttered without awe, never heard but with meditation? At these seats of sound learning, of religious education, the students indeed kneel,—to discuss the boat-race, or the cricket-match;—and



prayer-book,—to make it the subject of profane  
and ribald comments. Nor would the matter  
be remedied, if, by more vigilant inspection, all breaches  
of outward decorum could be prevented. The evil is  
neither in that which is done nor in that which is said;  
it is in the state of mind to which the system leads, and of  
which conversation and conduct are merely symptoms  
and evidences. I do not go one hair's-breadth too far,  
when I say that an immense proportion of all the in-  
fluence to religious worship which we almost all  
feel in after-life, and which many of us sincerely  
attribute to these enforced attendances at  
the chapel, this much-praying ordered by law, these  
statutory genuflections. The habit which is epi-  
sodic at Cambridge, of connecting no devotional  
feeling with the pretence of devotion, of hear-  
ing the names of religion without the slightest reli-  
gious consciousness, of assembling for worship while  
the heart worships not at all,—this habit influences the  
mind for years after the cause which produced it has  
ceased; and men who are neither doubters nor scorers,  
yet feel that they have no comfort in praying together  
with others, and that the old accustomed rites, and ances-  
tral phraseology of Christianity, are to them but empty  
ceremonies and worthless sounds, wearisome, sense-  
less, hypocritical formalities. Can your Lordship deny  
that this obviously must be the result, that it actually is  
the result, of the scheme of discipline I refer to? And,  
therefore, except from the desperate delusion of mis-  
leading names for things, of believing that Jehovah  
ever can desert the temple of Jerusalem, and that it is  
sufficient to cleanse the outside of the platter, and to  
disinfect the sepulchre; wherefore, but from this  
error, can proceed the obstinacy in supporting a system  
adverse to all religious feeling? and, wherefore, but  
from the same cause, the affectation, if not the fraudu-  
lence, which pretends to discover, in the mere world-  
liness, derivable from theological lectures, the  
whole that is necessary for the making men Christians  
the living depths of their bosoms?

Of directly legal institutions, there is nothing more  
which I have now time to mention. But there is a  
kind of moral influence from the Cambridge system,  
which is so important as to demand some attention  
before I leave the subject. Remember, my Lord, that  
the complaint of the London University, because it is  
not to make its students religious. Let us, then, look  
at another portion of that scheme which your Lord-  
ship's speech meant nothing, if it did not assume to  
make the students of Cambridge pious. Can it be  
contended that I am unfairly disclosing the secrets of  
the prison-house, when I state that every young  
man who goes to our University, the moment  
he sets foot within the holy precincts, finds him-  
self the master of unbounded credit with cook,  
butler, tailor, and wine merchant? The con-  
sequences may readily be imagined. A few of the  
students, pre-eminently set the fashion; the weak and inexperienced,  
and, in a vast proportion of the whole, follow it. The  
institutions contract inveterate habits of expense and luxury,  
which probably degrade and ruin them for life; and  
this for whose profit? Can your Lordship feel any  
thing but indignation, when you remember that the  
traders by this scheme are not merely the tradesmen of  
the religious town, and the menials of the colleges, but the lights  
and guides of the University, the tutors, in science  
and letters, of the English gentry and aristocracy, the  
prominent dignitaries and future bishops? I will not leave  
my assertion open to cavil, and lay myself at the mercy  
of those who may take advantage of the ignorance of  
my readers. The mode in which this profitable con-  
spiracy (I use a strong word because it is a just one)  
is managed, is this. The bills for the expenses of the  
students are sent to the tutors, who receive the payment;  
and, if the assertion of every tradesman in Cambridge can  
be credited, many months, nay, sometimes years, inter-  
vene, before they can withdraw their money from the  
hands of the college magnates, whose profits thus  
depend on the largeness of the sums disbursed by their  
pupils, and on the length of time they can be retained  
in their bankers' possession. My Lord, as  
this point, I have done. I have not the leisure nor  
the space to dilate upon the subject; I believe I may  
safely trust it to the thoughts of all my readers. There  
are innumerable other memorable things in the social  
system of Cambridge. I must abstain from them all,  
which merely occupy a very few moments in speaking of  
the kind of character which is likely to grow out of  
these institutions, when the mind is planted there for  
character.

The habits of a college, if long continued, are, in my  
judgment, more unfavourable than almost any that could be  
imagined; and it is no slight argument for a change, that  
the education of the legislators, the lawyers, and the

clergy of England, is now committed to those who have  
been subjected for years to the worst moral and intel-  
lectual culture. One cannot look at a court, inhabited  
by the fellows of a college, without imagining oneself  
in an hospital of mental maladies; and these the more  
desperate, because the patients are almost uniformly  
unconscious of their own diseased condition, and only  
know the discontent and pain which result from it.  
The fellow has been educated on a plan whereby the  
object of exertion is not the improvement of the facul-  
ties, but the attainment of a definitive outward prize.  
The prize is won; and the exertion ceases. He re-  
mains a narrow and shallow reservoir, in which a cer-  
tain quantity of words and formulas may stagnate and  
corrupt. The only strong emotion to which his college  
career has ever subjected him, is the wish to outstrip his  
competitors, and thereby, after the three or four years  
of probation, obtain a sinecure for life. To this period  
of excitement he fondly looks back through all the  
subsequent languor of his listless being; and cherishes  
the conviction that the spirit of rivalry is the noblest,  
the happiest, and the holiest of motives. In the mean  
time, he has no longer any race to run, any reward to  
struggle for: and the whist-table, the college scandal,  
the dull carouse of the combination-room, the get-  
ting up a petition against Roman Catholic conciliation,  
the forming a plan for destroying some obnoxious de-  
bating-club, supply their utmost of degrading stimulant  
to all that is left of his decaying sensibilities. He has  
made himself a minister of the gospel, because he  
would lose his fellowship if he continued to be a lay-  
man; and God is called upon to erect his tabernacle  
among the crumbling and weed-clad ruins of a wasted  
mind. Is it more likely that we should see there  
the glory of the Shechinah, or the gleam of some  
vapour which only springs from corruption, and  
dwells in desolation? The fellow has perhaps  
been made a tutor. Knowing nothing of the human  
mind, but that it contains the faculty of memory, and,  
in under-graduates, a tendency to rebellion, he has  
undertaken a task which requires the most intimate  
acquaintance with the whole nature of man. Having  
lived in circumstances which tend to deaden all his  
affections, he is put into an office which requires the  
strongest and most flexible sympathy. He is to teach  
languages and sciences, and knows nothing of lan-  
guage but vocabularies, nothing of science but formu-  
las; and thus prepared, he is to educate, for the Par-  
liament and the Pulpit, a number of young men of dif-  
ferent tempers, tastes, talents, and acquirements, col-  
lected from a vast variety of schools and teachers,  
and, of course, accustomed to as many and as widely  
various modes of cultivation and instruction. What  
is it he does? What can he do? In some rare in-  
stances, as he knows not how to teach the mind, he  
drills it; as he knows not how to educate the faculties,  
he represses them. But, if he be not a wonder, or rather  
a miracle, he lets the idle learn nothing and the industri-  
ous just what they please; while the idea of educating,  
not for the greatest quantity of instruction, but for the  
highest degree of improvement, has never been heard  
of by lecturers, or Heads of Houses. The fellow is out  
of the way of all society but that of his own corpora-  
tion. There is not in most instances even a casual  
intermixture of women: and, if there were, or, if he stray  
in the vacations beyond the blasted circle, he knows  
too well the penalty that awaits him, should he permit  
but that first light clinging of interest which might, by  
any possibility, grow into a strong and consoling affec-  
tion. All the persons with whom he habitually lives  
have their own petty jealousies. Some college post,  
some wretched matter of precedence, some relic of  
former rivalry, supplies the repellent; and he lives  
shut up in his own personal feelings, restrained from  
every sphere of active exertion, and cut off  
from every object which could call forth his warmer  
and more expansive feelings. He is at last a feeble and  
broken old man. When he looks back to his past ex-  
istence, he sees nothing but a sandy desert, in which  
he has opened no fountains, nor planted any vine-  
yard. There is not a single source of hope or comfort  
around him; and he either continues, in his unhappi-  
ness, to wander through his old accustomed haunts till  
he drops, half pensive at the shock, half grateful for  
the relief, into his grave in the ante-chapel, or carries  
the palsied remnant of his days to some long-expected  
rectory and withered bride, and undertakes the guid-  
ance of hundreds of human souls, with no more  
knowledge of human nature than he has learned from  
his own wretchedness. The lesson might be of mere  
use to others than it possibly could be to himself;  
but the fault is not so much in the deluded public, or  
the miserable victims, as in the very system which is  
so fraught with evil to both.

What, my Lord, can be so different as this from the  
vital energy and widely-benevolent direction given to  
all the faculties by true religion? Could courses of  
theological lectures remedy these evils, and give life to  
the mind which is dead, and decaying, and buried for  
ever in a college? Or, is it not possible, that a plan,  
in every thing the opposite of this, may prepare men  
better for the reception of Christianity than does the  
present course of rivalry and Greek Testament, of fel-  
lowships and Paley's Evidences?

I have no interest in saying these things, but very  
much the contrary. Had I consulted my own profit,  
comfort, and advancement in the world, I should have  
written very differently; but I trust your Lordship  
will remember that others have duties as well as clergy-  
men, and are as answerable for the neglect of them.  
I hope your Lordship will believe that it is from this  
impression I have written; and, so confiding, I re-  
main, my Lord, your Lordship's obedient servant,

A MEMBER OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

### WATER COLOUR PORTRAIT.

To the Editor of the Athenæum.

SIR,

THERE is in the present Exhibition, at Somerset-  
House, a picture, which has been most disadvan-  
tageously placed, but which will, probably, not only  
attract the especial notice of the pictorial doctors  
of the Sorbonne, but also of the more sedate critics,  
and, by its complete illisiveness, secure very general  
attention. It is No. 548 in the Catalogue, and called  
simply 'A Portrait,' painted by Mr. Bowyer, of Pall  
Mall. There are certain peculiarities attending this  
portrait, which seem to defy scientific calculation; and,  
while I do not by any means wish to detract from its  
merits as a work displaying the skill of a first-rate  
portrait-painter, I, at the same time, conceive, that  
the complete illusion which the artist has produced, is  
still more striking. A portrait the size of life, in *water  
colours*, appears to me to be quite a novelty in the Ex-  
hibition at Somerset-House; but these *water colours*  
have given an 'expression of the texture of surface,'  
(to use a phrase of Mr. Landseer, in his Lectures at  
the Royal Institution,) which, with reference to the  
'human face divine,' comes nearer to the appearance of  
flesh than even oils; and the dark back-ground being  
without the glare which is necessarily attendant on the  
use of oil pigment, seems to absorb the rays of vision  
as we gaze. The eye is bent on vacancy; that is to  
say, on an unsubstantial back-ground, as it ought to  
be; and the sight seems to penetrate—as in looking at  
indefinite darkness in nature—into space, instead of  
being arrested against a shining dark wall, as in oil  
pictures generally. I cannot close my notice of this  
singular performance, which, added to these pecu-  
liarities, has all the force of an oil painting, without  
saying that it is the nearest approach to complete illu-  
sion, which is the true end of all pictorial representa-  
tion, of any thing I have ever met with, either in the  
ancient or modern schools of portrait-painting. It is  
the more necessary to point out its merits, as I  
do in this especial manner, from its being placed so  
low, and so near the door of the room in which it is  
hung, as to be scarcely likely to attract the notice of the  
visitor.

AN AMATEUR.

### LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

An Essay on the power of Rectors and Vicars to leave their  
Glebes and Tithes for Twenty-one years, or three lives, so as  
to bind their successors, is preparing for publication, by a  
Barrister.

The Rev. G. S. Faber will shortly publish, a supplement to  
his *Difficulties of Romanism*, in reply to an answer by the  
Bishop of Strasbourg, (late of Aire.)

### WEEKLY METEOROLOGICAL JOURNAL.

Temperature registered at 9 A.M. and 8 P.M.	May.	Therm. A.M. F.M.	Barom. at Noon.	Winds.	Weather.	Prevailing Cloud.
	Mon. 5	51° 25°	29. 40	W to NW	Shry.	Cum. Nimb.
	Tues. 6	50 51	29. 42	Variable	Cl. Fair.	Cum. Cumul.
	Wed. 7	50 51½	29. 47	N.E.	R. p.m.	Cum. Clr.
	Thur. 8	50½ 51½	29. 55	Ditto.	Fair.	Cumulus.
	Frid. 9	55 57	29. 80	NW to W.	Ditto.	Ditto.
	Satur. 10	60½ 57	29. 90	W to SW.	Cl. Fair.	Cirrocstratus.
	Sun. 11	61	29. 95	S.W.	Ditto.	Ditto.

Mornings fair, except on Thursday. Nights fair, except on  
Monday and Wednesday. Loud thunder, rain, and hail, on  
Tuesday, p.m. During the storm, there was a diminution in  
the temperature of 10 degrees.

Astronomical Observations.  
The Moon in her last quadrature on Tuesday, 5 h. 32' p.m.  
Sun's place on Sunday, 90° 42' 30" Taurus.  
Length of day on Sunday, 15 h. 20 min.  
Increase of day on Sunday, 7 h. 36 min.

## LIST OF BOOKS PUBLISHED DURING THE WEEK.

- Jacob's Second Report on the Corn Laws, 8vo., 13s.  
The Literary Character, by J. D'Israeli, fourth edition, revised, 2 vols., post 8vo., 18s.  
Mexico in 1827, by H. G. Ward, Esq., 2 vols., 8vo., plates, 11. 18s.  
Gray's Operative Chemist, 8vo., 11. 11s. 6d.  
The Comic Minstrel, 32mo., 2s.  
The Common Place Book of Romantic Tales, 24mo., 4s.  
Rev. E. Heren's Thirty-three Village Sermons, new edition, 12mo., 4s. 6d.  
Compendious View of the Proofs of the Authenticity and Inspiration of Old and New Testament, 12mo., 3s.  
Sarratt's New Treatise on the Game of Chess, second edition, 2 vols., 8vo., 21s.  
The Fables of Phædrus, with a Literal English Translation, as used at the Hazelwood School, 2s. 6d.  
Select Sentences, from Justin, Caesar, Nepos, and Eutropius, 2s.  
Athenstone's Fall of Nineveh, a Poem, 8vo., 12s.  
Chronicles of the Canongate, Second Series, by the Author of Waverley, &c., 3 vols., post 8vo., 31s. 6d.  
Coleridge's Poetical Works, 3 vols., crown 8vo., 11. 16s.  
Thomson's Lectures on Scripture, second edition, 1 vol. 12mo., 8s.  
Rev. W. S. Gilley's Horæ Catechetice, crown 8vo., 5s. 6d.  
James's Christian Charity Explained, 12mo., 6s.  
Nimrod, 3 vols., 8vo., 31s. 6d.  
Rev. J. Stewart's Sermons, 8vo., 10s. 6d.  
Rev. J. Jowett's Sermons, 2 vols., 12mo., 10s.  
Mrs. Hemans's Records of Woman, and other Poems, fc. 8s. 6d.  
Captain Ross on Steam Navigation, 4to., 30s.  
Bainbridge's Fly Fisher's Guide, second edition, 8vo., 16s.  
Three Days at Killarney, with other Poems, 8vo., 7s.  
Gibbon's Roman Empire, 8 vols., 8vo., 31. 4s.  
Fletcher on Prayer, 2d edition, 12mo., 6s.  
Bartlett's Discourses, 12mo., 3s. 6d.  
The Romance of History of England, by Henry Neele, 2d edit., 3 vols., 8vo., 11. 11s. 6d.  
The Mortimers, or the Vale of MacLynlath, 3 vols., 12mo., 11. 1s.  
Bennett's Fishes of Ceylon, No. 1. (to be completed in 6 Numbers,) royal 4to., 11. 1s.  
Recollections of Royalty, by C. J. Jones, Esq., 2 vols., 8vo., 11. 5s.  
Manual of Rank, 8vo., 15s.  
Continental Traveller's Oracle, or Maxims of Foreign Locomotion, by Dr. A. Eldon, 2 vols., fc., 15s.  
Pelham, or the Adventures of a Gentleman, 3 vols., post 8vo., 11. 11s. 6d.  
Imaginary Conversations of Literary Men and Statesmen, by Walter Savage Landor, 3 vols., 8vo., 14s.

**THE EXHIBITION OF PORTRAITS** of the Most ILLUSTRIOUS PERSONAGES of ENGLISH HISTORY, from the Galleries of the National Gallery, and from Public Collections, is now open at Messrs. HARDING and LEAPARD'S, No. 4, Pall Mall East.  
Admission by Tickets only, which may be had on application as above.

**MR. MARTIN'S ENGRAVINGS TO ILLUSTRATE THE BIBLE, 'PARADISE LOST,' &c. &c.**

**THE SPLENDID AND SUBLIME COMPOSITIONS,** Twenty-six in Number, of this celebrated Artist on subjects of Scripture History, designed and engraved in Mezzotinto on the Plates, simultaneously and wholly by J. MARTIN, Esq., may be had collectively, or in separate prints, on the following terms:

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